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# IF I HAD ONLY ONE SERMON TO PREACH

*If I Had Only One Sermon to Preach*

# IF I HAD ONLY ONE SERMON TO PREACH

## Sermons by Twenty-one Ministers

Edited, with an Introduction, by

*Dr. Charles Stelzle*

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# *PREFACE*

Early in the year the Church Advertising Department of the International Advertising Association suggested to the clergymen of America that on a given Sunday in Lent, 1927, they take as their theme "IF I HAD ONLY ONE SERMON TO PREACH," and then to discuss it with the utmost frankness. There is no doubt that thousands of pastors acted upon this suggestion. In one city alone, over fifty did so.

This event attracted nation-wide attention because of the publicity given to it by the Associated and United Press and by the feature stories printed in local newspapers.

Several of the sermons in this volume were preached on this occasion, and they are included in this series because of the great interest which they created. Other notable leaders in the religious life of our country were invited to write sermons on the same subject, especially for this volume, it being understood that they were to speak with freedom the Truth as they saw it.

And so, we have in this book the viewpoint of Protestant, Catholic and Jew, of liberal and conservative; but, we believe, each expressing the deep conviction of his mind and heart as to what is the one supreme message for the times in which we live—and let it be added, for the hour in which that particular sermon would be preached.

# *INTRODUCTION*

There is always a moment of suspense when the prisoner at the bar is asked by the presiding Judge if he has anything to say before sentence shall be pronounced; or when, at that particular moment in the marriage ceremony, the officiating clergyman solemnly raises the question as to whether anyone present knows of any reason why those about to be "joined together" should not become man and wife.

These are moments when final words must be spoken; or else, in some particulars, at least, the belated protestants must thereafter "hold their peace."

There is no doubt that under these circumstances, the principals in court room and chapel experience mingling emotions. What these are can scarcely be imagined. They would vary as widely as there are personalities involved.

It is possible that when some of the preachers were asked to write a sermon for this book which would express the "one sermon message" as they believe it today, they honestly hesitated, because they had never thought of "final words." It may have seemed too much like being trapped, like the prisoner at the bar who was asked to make a defense of his conduct, or perhaps they had in the past advocated certain doctrines which were, in part at least, incompatible with

their present-day beliefs, so that they could not be "joined together." Or, what might be even worse, they might in the future change their minds because they had received further light, and then they would be confronted with the "final words" of a previous period.

All of these things are highly probable, for, however firmly one may accept certain teachings or conclusions on any subject, time always changes one's opinions with reference to their details or application, even though the major premise may still be accepted.

How many of the contributors to this volume passed through this process of thinking nobody knows. This much is certain—not any of the writers felt that he needed to present an entirely new truth, as though all that he had said in the past were inadequate. Unquestionably, in most cases, the sermons prepared for this volume express the mature thought and conviction of the writers, which have been spoken many times, and in different forms. Back of them are the very lives, the heart struggles, the deepest emotions of those who wrote them.

In some instances the sermons contributed were preached just at the time when they were asked for and when they seemed to be the most important things to be said at that particular moment,—they were naturally the only sermons which their makers would preach at that time because the occasion demanded it. This may account for the apparent lack of a "full and

complete gospel" which some critics might expect from the minister who had only one more sermon to preach. It was not expected that each writer would present an entire system of theology or a complete code of ethics.

A striking illustration of this is found in the sermon preached by Bishop Brent at Lausanne, which is included in the book. He was elected President of the World Conference on Faith and Order. On such an occasion there could be only one theme in his mind—"The Call to Unity." That, therefore, became the supreme subject that he must preach about if he had only one more sermon to preach.

Under all of these circumstances, it is remarkable that the twenty-one sermons in this book should be so unified and cohesive. While no particular topics were assigned to the writers, except the general theme of the book, they seemed, collectively, to have brought out the great, outstanding doctrines of the Church.

Bishop Freeman devotes his entire address to the story of the birth of Jesus, while Bishop Candler emphasizes the resurrection of Jesus. Dr. Vance makes a strong appeal for the divinity of Jesus, while Dr. Jefferson challenges us with the text "Behold, the Man!" Dr. Atkins speaks of the "Triune Entirety of the Christian Revelation," founding his discussion on the text "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life," whereas Dr. Jenkins emphasizes "Jesus Christ—The Same Yesterday, Today and Forever." Appropriate is Dr. Stidger's address "Aware of the Eternal," show-

ing that we are living every minute within sight of the immortals.

"Christ, Priest and Victim," the stately address from Cardinal O'Connell, "The Perfect Salvation" by Dr. Rice, "The Inspiration of Life" by Dr. Conrad, "The First and Final Truth" by Dr. Newton, and "Can I believe in God?" by Dr. Merrill, ground one in the great fundamentals of Religion.

"What is Religion?" by Dr. Gillis, and "What is a Religious Life?" by Dr. Holmes make stimulating reading to every seeker after the truth.

Then follow the challenging addresses by Dr. Freeman on "The Gods Ye Have Chosen," "The One-Thing Man" by Shannon, "The Curse of Cynicism" by Dr. Fosdick, "Twin Perils" by Dr. Poling, and "Creative Freedom" by Dr. Hough, dealing with the more practical phases of life.

The strong presentation of Judaism by Rabbi Harrison, under the title "I am a Hebrew," gives one a broader conception of the basis of neighboring religions, and entirely appropriate is Bishop Brent's "The Call to Unity," with which the book closes.

Every contributor to this volume is a modernist in the sense that he is face to face with present-day problems. These he is trying to interpret in a place of leadership in the nation. More and more are the clergy being recognized as prophets and teachers, largely because men are acknowledging that the great questions of the day are fundamentally religious.

## INTRODUCTION

The messages in this book will guide those who are seeking to know the great underlying truths which give religion permanence, character and power. Without these it would become an empty vessel, disappointing those who would drink at the fountain of life.

CHARLES STELZLE.

*If I Had Only One Sermon to Preach*

# The First and Final Truth

*By* Joseph Fort Newton, D.D., memorial church of st. paul, overbrook, philadelphia

*"He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."*

—I JOHN IV – 8-10

*"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

—ROM. VIII – 38, 39

EVERY preacher has but one sermon to preach, no matter how many subjects he may select or how many titles he may use. It is the story of his own heart, the truth made real in his own experience and vivid in his vision, and he can tell no other triumphantly. Whatever text he may take, whatever art of exposition he may employ, he is ever telling the one truth HE has learned by living; the "one beauty he was sent to seek." By as much as he tells the truth of which he is utterly persuaded, by so much, and no more, does he persuade his fellow-souls.

If I were preaching for the last time—as indeed I may be, since no one can tell what a day may bring forth—I should try to tell, however falteringly, but

with every art of expression and every resource of insight at my command, the one truth most worth telling, or such part of it as life and love and death, and beauty and pity and pain have taught me to see in the dim country of this world. So my subject is the first Truth and the final Reality, the source, sanction and satisfaction of our mortal needs and immortal longings: the truth about God, by whose grace we have life and by whose inspiration we have understanding; the Truth that makes all other truth true.

Such a truth is forever untellable, but we must forever be trying to tell it, since nothing else or less will satisfy "the little, infinite soul of man," until at last, or soon or late, if faith and hope and love have made us worthy, we see the white truth which human words discolor. To that end I take two texts, written by the two master mystics of our faith, knowing full well that they transcend my power of interpretation, the one an exposition of the other; the first an affirmation—nay more, a revelation—so stupendous that it transfigures life and death and all that lies between and beyond, lifting the clouds from all our souls and setting us free alike from "an old dark backward and abysm of time" and our fear of the Night and the Morrow; the second an anthem, a symphony, moving now with the lilt of a lyric, and now with the majestic sweep of an oratorio, ending in a Hallelujah Chorus. Such light shines, such music sings at the heart of our faith!

# THE FIRST AND FINAL TRUTH

## I

Surely, of all words ever uttered upon our earth, there are none greater than the words of St. John, in their profound significance and their satisfying simplicity: "God is Love." These words, with their context, tell us the three things we most want to know, and the first is that God does exist, not as a figment of faith, still less as a dream, a guess, or a shadow cast upon the curtain of our hopes and fears, but as the one Reality in all, above all, beyond all, independent of our little minds and the inspiration and consolation of these our days and years. Aye, God is at once the meaning of the universe, to which all facts contribute—dark facts, bright facts, gray facts —and the hope of humanity; and to know Him, as Dante said, is to learn how to make our lives eternal. But even the reality of God is not enough until we know what He is, what is His spirit, character, and purpose.

Every man is aware that he is every moment dependent upon a Power other and greater than himself, by what name soever he may call it—Fate, Force, Destiny, God. The real crux of the question is not as to the reality of such a Power, but as to the nature and character of Him "in whose great hand we stand." To know that God is love, meaning by love no soft sentiment, but a creative passion, a moral principle, a spiritual fellowship, is to know the meaning and glory of life and "the benediction in which all things move."

Once we are persuaded of that truth, the rest is only a detail of interpretation, since we have found that in God and in ourselves which enables us to endure and triumph over anything that life or death can do to us; which Royce said is the real meaning and value of faith. By such faith we learn that there is tenderness behind the hardness of life, meaning in its mystery, purpose in its often strange medley, and prophecy in its fleeting, fading beauty.

Today men try wistfully to grasp such a faith and fail, because they reverse the order of things, forgetting that spiritual faith and victory have their source not in human aspiration but in Divine inspiration. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His son"; which is a simple and vivid way of saying that religion has its origin in the Divine initiative, not in human invention, as so many fear in our day. If man seeks God it is because God first seeks man, haunts him, waylays him with every kind of strategy, and He will not tire nor tarry till He wins him, however far-wandering. No argument is needed; the facts prove it. Man would not imagine, much less need, religious faith if the object of it did not exist; there would be nothing to suggest it, nothing to sustain it. There will be no pause of mind, nor power of victory, until we return to the true order of experience: God first, God last, the source and fulfilment of our faith.

Alas, in our day we are obsessed with introspection, seeking amid the phantoms of the mind for a subjec-

tive salvation, as if trying to lift ourselves by our own shoe-strings: hence the tiresome egotism of an ingrowing religion, now so much in vogue. What we need, as much for our sanity of mind as for our health of heart, is an emancipating rediscovery of the obvious fact that our life is from above downward, and that our help and hope are in God. It was such an experience that lifted St. Paul out of a hard legal literalism into the light, liberty and power of the Gospel and set him singing. If we add this anthem to the words of St. John, together they make "one music as before, but vaster," until it fills the earth and the sky:

"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

II

If we analyze that anthem for a moment, we discover that the first separating, desolating fact that the Apostle faces, is Death. Until we make terms with the shadow that waits for every man, master its menace, and defeat its despair, we can have no security, no serenity. Mere stoic submission is better than rebellion, and better still the rich, warm, loving act of acceptance of human destiny—an act not simply of the mind but of the complete being—which Shakespeare puts into the magical utterance of Edgar in *King Lear*:

> We must endure
> Our going hence even as our coming hither;
> Ripeness is all.

But something more is both a possibility and a privilege, if we have the heart for adventure and know how to win it; such a yea-saying to the sum of things as Keats called "the very thing wherein consists Poetry," and he might have added Religion.

The spiritual history of Keats is a perfect example, if we take the wonderful two months following his letter to his brother, February 18th, 1819, until May. It began with a sonnet in which we hear a laugh of cynical despair, bitter and brittle, at "an eternal fierce destruction" in nature, life feeding on life in earth and sea and sky. The looming menace of dark death, a mockery to the love he desired, the poetry he dreamed, the fame he coveted, the beauty he adored, jarred him to the depths; as if it divided divinity with God. But in those two months of silence he won his way to victory, and death is no longer a darkness which blots out the soul, but the ecstasy and crown of life; "eloquent, just and mighty Death," as Whitman saw it. And with his spiritual victory, his genius bloomed in a perfection of form and a richness of serene and triumphant vision by virtue of which he belongs with Shakespeare, and the masters and deliverers of the soul.

Then St. Paul adds the words, "nor life," its untoward vicissitude, its persecution of events, its buffetings of circumstance, which often enough seem to belie

God and make Him little more than a figment of fancy. It is His love of us that holds through the night and the storm, and never lets go, though sorrow be added to sorrow, and disaster follows fast, and follows faster. Across the ages we hear St. Paul singing songs in the night, counting it both an honor and a joy to suffer stripes, imprisonment, shipwreck, and at last death, for the sake of One who suffered more for him, even the shame of the Cross, its mockings and its muddy brutality. The words following, "nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers," tell us of dominions of superstition and hierarchies of fear under which men lived in the days of St. Paul, more real than the earth itself, but now, happily, melted into thin air, leaving hardly a memory of their terror or a trace of their torment.

More real to us is the tyranny of Time and Space, "nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth," both of which have been extended to distances and dimensions so appalling as to affright and dismay the soul. Men of science reckon the size of the universe, as now unveiled, in light-year measurements, and the age of man upon the earth in eons that make us dizzy, until our tiny lives, so brief and broken, seem as insignificant as the life of a mote in the evening air. Indeed, one of the amazing facts in the history of the modern soul is the spiritual inferiority complex in man in face of the physical order, as we have seen it grow from the time when Tennyson wrote "Vastness" to our year of grace, if we may still use

that word. Faith, once so mighty, has become timid, abashed, apologetic and on the defensive, as if suffocated by sheer size, and bludgeoned by mere bulk! Why should it be so, unless it be that we have lost the key and clue to the meaning of life, allowing the victories of the mind to end in spiritual obfuscation?

For surely the facts and forces of science are plastic enough, and may be justly given an idealistic interpretation as mechanistic; far more justly so, because it was the mind of man, toiling under the little gray skull-cap of the brain, that measured those depths and explored those distances. It makes one think how Jesus chided his disciples for their fear when a whiff of wind rocked the boat: "Why are you afraid like that? Where is your faith?" Where is our religion, if its creative faith cannot subdue the new material universe, as uncurtained by science, to spiritual meanings, and find God not in the stars or space supremely, but in realities as real as pig-iron and potash which we know best through something in ourselves—also a fact in the universe and a part of it—which has never accepted utter identification with outer force and brute fact? Wherefore the history of love, and the prophecy of ethical passion? These, too, are facts, no less than salts and acids!

Nor Dante, nor Milton, nor any other singer, rises so high as St. Paul does when, in ending his catalogue of the antagonists of faith, he strikes out the sweeping, shining phrase, "Nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God."

As some one has said, it is "as if he had got impatient of the enumeration of impotencies, and having named the outside boundaries in space of the created universe, flings, as it were, with one rapid toss, into that large room the whole that it can contain, and triumphs over it all," through One who, because He is Love, and love never faileth,

> "Spurned the tame laws of Time and Space,
> And brake through all the heavens to our embrace."

III

For it was in the Reason, the Word made flesh, full of grace and truth, wearing our familiar human shape—a babe, a boy, a man—brother to us all living in time by the power of an endless life, winsome withal and sweetly human—aye, more human than any of us, though more divine than all the gods of whom man has ever dreamed: it was in the life of Jesus, in His dark cross outside the city gate, in His victory over death, that St. Paul and his brother mystic found the key to the meaning of life and the clue to the cosmic riddle. Elsewhere, in a singing sentence in which he strikes the same great chord, St. Paul told the source and secret of his faith: "God, who commandeth the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

Such difference Jesus made and still makes, adding a new dimension to life, revealing that to which men

entrust their soul here and hereafter; but how can such things be? No one knows; it is at once a fact and a mystery—a life became a religion, a tragedy was transmuted into a theology, and death unfolded into a revelation of one vast life that cannot die. What can words say, except it be that in a life like our own, disinfected of the things that make us hateful to ourselves and others, but duplicate of our weariness and woe, the "Love that moves the sun and all the stars" found focus and functioned in the life of man, dividing time into before and after, and transfiguring the weary weight of an unintelligible world with wonder, love and joy. Yet how little such words tell, since the truth of which they try to speak eludes even the magic of poetry. None the less it may be known by experience, by the simple of mind, the lowly of heart, and such as walk in the way of love.

Because these things are so; because God is Love, He is known only by love, and faith attains reality only in love. Not by argument, not by philosophy, not by logic linked and strong, useful as these may be after their kind, do we win the first and final Truth that sets us free from fear and dark Fate, but by such love as lived in the life of Jesus, and which He can kindle in our hearts, despite the ages that have come and gone. How simple, yet how profound it is, beyond our fathoming. The depth and purity of our love is the measure of our knowledge of Him whom to know aright is life eternal. "Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. God is

love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." If, once more, we add to the simple, searching words of St. John the anthem of St. Paul, we have the conclusion of the whole matter:

> "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, if there be any praise, think on these things. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen."

## The Triune Entirety of the Christian Revelation

*By* Gaius Glenn Atkins, D.D., hoyt professor of homiletics, auburn theological seminary

*"I am the way, the truth, and the life."*
—JOHN XIV – 6

JESUS CHRIST had once in His brief hour between a supper, and a garden called Gethsemane, to say what He could never say again, and if there is anywhere a text for a sermon like this it is the text from which Jesus Himself preached the sermon He could preach but once: "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life."

* * *

Jesus said these ten words to twelve troubled men in a borrowed room in Herod's Jerusalem. They had lived with Him for almost three years in wonderful and intimate ways which had been, as all the ways of friends are, both outer and inner. The outer ways had been immemorial footpaths across the Palestinian hills, sun-washed and starlit ways, which the changing seasons bordered with grasses and lilies or barley white to the harvest, or else they had been ways through little villages, neighborly and near, or else highways which traders and Roman cohorts used, or else the

stone paved streets of Jerusalem. And now these outer ways had ended in an upper room.

The inner ways had also been starlit and sun-washed, but with another light. He had led them in paths of duty and understanding, and through old forms to new realities. He had brought them near to one another and strangely near to Him. He had made the unseen as real as the hills above Nazareth. Under His guidance love had taken new form and meanings, goodness had become a luminous ideal and a high command, God a brooding fatherly presence who had a mind even for birds and flowers, and so much the more for His children. He had led them into new understandings of their own natures and to mountain tops of transfigured vision. He had woven associations of power across wind-swept Gennesaret and filled the streets of Capernaum with memories of tenderness—and now these ways also were to end.

And they were ending too soon; nothing was finished, either in the lives of the disciples or the enterprise of Jesus Christ. As the supper drew to an end the men about the table grew deeply troubled; they did not understand the meaning of what they saw and heard, they felt the menace in the dark outside, they were not even sure of themselves. They had always up till then been able to follow and find Him wherever He went, and now He told them He was on the eve of a journey He must take alone. And without Him they could see no future nor be sure of any direction; they knew only a blind pathlessness of life.

"Lord we know not whither Thou goest; how know we the way."

Then Jesus laid bare the three needs of life for them and for us, and offered Himself as the answer: "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life." Here, then, is the setting of the text. It was addressed to unperfected discipleships and unfulfilled expectations about to be wrecked, it would seem, upon a cross, and groping helplessness charged with a mighty enterprise, in a word to men like ourselves in a splendid and piteous estate. It offers what humanity most needs, and without which humanity is helpless: A Way for practical conduct, the Truth for assurance and understanding, Life in the fullness and glory and endlessness of it; and it offers all these not as ghostly abstractions, but as living realities in the person of Jesus Christ. Here is the heart of the Gospel, and the centuries since have done nothing, save to supply new illustrations of its timeless truth.

I

We need first a way of life.

The word "way" is rooted deep in the folk speech of our race. It first meant to carry, but since one carries a load only to bring it where it ought to be "way" became the path the burden-bearer used, then the journey itself and the direction of the journey, and finally, for the genius of language is always a poet to find in simple things a vaster suggestion, it became the very course of life. Thereafter, there was no

limit to the use and application of it, and yet every use of it carries some suggestion of a means to an end, whether it be a ship gathering way as her sails take the wind, or a man's will riding down all hindrances, or a way to make a dream come true, or a surgeon's technique, or an engineer's device, or the habit of a soul or a state, or the way of all the earth to the dust. Whether, therefore, you take a journey or conceive a plan or would carry your burden bravely to the end, or ask an understanding of the issues of life, or want a road for faith beyond the hills of time, you need a way.

* * *

We need very greatly a way of dealing with ourselves. Life is an affair between rival claimants for the throne room of personality. We have, at the best, but a little clear inner space of self-knowledge and established purpose ringed with shadows, haunted by old fears and older instincts. The better part of us holds its own precariously against ways—how impossible to escape that word—which undo the bright promise of our humanity and make us of all God's creatures the strangest and most contradictory.

> "We are children of splendor and flame,
> Of shuddering also and tears,
> Magnificent, out of the dust we came
> And abject from the spheres."

What shall we do with ourselves, and what manner of men should we be? What disposal shall we make

of our powers? What shall rule, and what be subject, in the realm of personality so anarchical at its worst, so capable of splendid order at its best? For what shall we spend ourselves, and in the accumulation of what treasures shall we find our true wealth? The confusion of our own time, with its arresting contradictions of force and futility, is deeply rooted in our want of a sure wise way of dealing with ourselves; all confusions begin first of all with those who have lost the way in the labyrinthian turns of their own inner lives. All our restlessness re-echoes an old, old question a little changed but burdened with significance—"Lord, we know not whither we are going, how shall we know the way?" and now, as then, Jesus answers: "I am the way."

Jesus' way is the supreme way of the conduct of life. He belonged, of course, to His race, His age and His land. He was a village craftsman who put aside His tools for a divine destiny and wore the simplicities of His station as a garment. His sandaled feet would be ill-shod for our winter roads, and the loose structure of the society of His time allowed Him a serene aloofness from the cares of this world, which we should find it hard to imitate. The imitation of Christ lies deeper than that. He was no bond servant to sense or things, and His mastery over them was not in the barrenness of circumstance, but in the supremacy of the spirit. He disassociated once and for all wealth of life from cluttering ownership. He permitted wealth to those who were able to subdue

it to the uses of the spirit. He forbade it to those for whom it had become a tyranny. His supreme concern was not with things, but with the soul.

It is no mere coincidence that soul and life are interchangeable translations of His key word. The soul as He conceived it was no ghostly tenant of a house of clay, but a man's best and most permanent self, rich in experience, vibrant with holy passion, and so engaged with timeless things as to claim for itself an everlasting inheritance. He made the simplest life ample through the range of its relationships. He saved toil from drudgery by making it a glorious service of God and man. He was always busy but never driven, and in any weariness He knew and sought the unfailing sources of healing rest. A quiet and understanding intimacy with Nature breathes through all His words. He loved all sorts and conditions of human folk, and invited himself to be their guest. He took the simple pleasure of life as you take the friendly turns of a road through a lovely country, or rose above them as an aviator draws an arc through the sky.

He moved through all the light and shadow of the human estate and yet His own inner life was never darkened; He made of the shadows themselves another glory. He had a sure mastery over circumstance, fearing nothing save fear and hating nothing but hate. He was always a gentleman, and though He had apparently only the learning of His time and station, His wisdom was as luminous as the summer sunlight

of Galilee and deep as the sky was high. A way of life like that is the secret of outer force and inner peace. It is established in the great veracities, it has found the springs of the enduring happiness, the sovereignty of it reduces competing enterprises and interests to their proper proportion, it enforces over all the machinery of life, an unfailing obedience to the will of God.

Our own time needs this way of life beyond our power to say how much we need it. We have entangled ourselves in a vast and driving order of our own creation, until our force is spent in serving the wearing endless need of it, and humanity has become too largely a means to an unhuman end. We have the stored wealth of the planet for raw material and the last subtle energy of it for force, and still miss the meaning of the long travail of creation and its singing flight through space, because we have been so strangely slow to subdue the urgencies of the flesh to the necessities of the soul and our wills to the will of God. Jesus of Nazareth laid the arresting touch of a hand still calloused with toil upon the immensities of power and pride with a single question: "What doth it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his own life?", and taught us even in the hidden places of our own souls the secret of escape and empowerment, when He said, "I am the way."

* * *

We need ways of living together.

Jesus began with the individual and his values and duties, for everything begins there and maybe ends there, but the soul is not grown in a vacuum, being the creation of comradeships.

Consider Jesus' use of singulars and plurals. The Beatitudes are all in the plural, for they involve experiences in which a man can never be alone. Those conditions which Jesus undertakes to transmute into blessedness are aspects of the inseparable associations of humanity, creations of the fret and strain of interwoven life. No one of us ever furnished the entire occasion for his own grief. It needs the seas and winds of humanity to make a tear, as it needs the sea and the wind and the night to make a dewdrop. Meekness is a spiritual gleam against a background of banked pride, and mercy a gift of the merciful spirit to offense and offenders. How shall we make peace unless there be the estranged, or return evil for good unless evil has been offered first? We are all threads in some vast fabric, but the threads are alive and the weaving hurts and the color is not a dye into which we are dipped, but the native hue of our spirits illumining the fabric from within. The whole grave music of the Beatitudes is a call to consider the blessedness of a human estate in which we may suffer and forget ourselves, and contribute to every fellowship patience and courage and overcoming love.

From such beginnings as these, Jesus develops the whole massive social ethic of the Gospels, though to

call it a social ethic is like finding an equivalent for the haunting motifs of the Unfinished Symphony in the harmonic vibration of wire and catgut. Jesus was not preaching a social Gospel, He was showing entangled human folk how to live together and putting "togetherness" into His verbs and nouns because men could not live at all and live apart. He uses singulars in His great injunctions because duty is the concern of the individual, but His duties are individual attitudes toward social relationships. Qualities which seem as sheerly personal as breath and thought rise out of association with others; though chastity be the very whiteness of a thought, it is the passing look at a woman through which the whiteness shines.

The great Christian attitudes, the force to outlast force with gentleness, wear down oppression with triumphant patience and put out a curse with a blessing as rain puts out a forest fire, are social attitudes; a love which knows no limit and refuses any exception at all until it lies about life like circumambient air about the great globe itself, is the imperial Christian positive. The quest for food and drink is a comrade's quest; we have no more right to say what shall *I* eat or what shall *I* drink than to pray *My* Father which art in heaven. And as His teaching reaches its splendid culmination, He enjoins us to seek the Kingdom of God as though there were no word for the sovereign and interwoven inclusiveness of His way of life, save the one word whose suggestion of common destiny,

glory and power has always ruled the imaginations of men.

Jesus' way of living together is as right for the Twentieth Century as for the First Century, as regnant for states meeting as sovereign equals as for a province under the bronze heel of Rome. Wherever estranged human contacts demand reconciliation and competitive interests demand resolution, and the far flung enterprises of our common life ask for a spirit to make them wise and humane, and a command high enough to make them free and obedient, there Jesus' way is the only way. We have tried every alternative which old instinct or new invention can suggest and found no issue but an *impasse* or a tragedy.

For twenty centuries every civilization which in any expression of it has taken a way hostile to, or proudly scornful of, the way of Jesus has ended beaten or undone. Yet we still choose the old roads of self-assertion and heady ambition rutted with retreat and bloodstained, to the sure and victorious way of Jesus Christ. There has been only one road of victorious permanence down the centuries: the way of Jesus Christ, nor is there any other road across the centuries to be. The enormous travail of western civilization lends urgency to our dilemma. We have no choice but to live together in the way of Jesus Christ or face the ultimate collapse of the human order. Still above discordant voices crying aloud at all the crossroads of modern civilization their little pride-begotten offers of guidance, we hear the one quiet voice to whose

divine authority the millenniums bear witness—"I am the way."

* * *

We need a way of salvation, and there is no road to peace either for the soul or the state, save the way of Jesus. We need ways of deliverance and redemption. He offers the way of the cross, which is not a theology but the way of vicarious love and goodness, life paid for, as it has always been and always must be, in terms of life, and God Himself sharing the bitter cost of the travailing souls of His children seeking forgiveness and goodness. We need above all a way to God. For unless we find Him near and real, and live in the sure sense of His loving power over us and His sovereign concern for us, we are orphans in a universe which, for all its immensities and splendor, is as remote from our haunting loneliness as Orion from an aching heart. And now that time and space break back toward horizons beyond our vision and our little world is lost in a skyey awesomeness where dying constellations drift down the careless cosmic tides, we shall lose God unless we find Him in what we can understand, nay, not in stars nor laws majestic, though He is there also, but in love and goodness claiming our humanity for its incarnate dwelling place, tender in a voice we can hear, luminous in a face we can see.

So Jesus Christ offers Himself to the seekers after

God and to all lost in doubt or loveless dark—"I am the way."

II

We need the truth. Our passion for it is a holy and quenchless flame, our quest for it has ennobled the human enterprise. When I consider how we began, in what ignorances and helplessnesses, fearsome and perplexed, and how we have made the very stones tell us their stories and have weighed and measured the stars and surprised the secrets of hidden life and are still unsatisfied, I am moved, more than in any other contemplation of the works of man, to cry out with the psalmist, "Thou hast made him a little lower than God." But there is always a truth which escapes us. It is the truth about ourselves and to what we are akin and the assuring meanings of the strange contradictions of our human estate, and what destinies we approach as the ultimate shadow falls across the little landscape of our lives.

Our need of truth is like our need of light upon the way. You cannot confidently use even a good road in the dark. Truth is seeing life steadily and seeing it whole, as you see a landscape on a June day, everything in order, and beautiful and right. Facts are not enough, they are but steps to climb by, and till they lead us to the source their service is unfinished. Each realm of knowledge needs another for its interpretation. Philosophy with its short gleams of guess and understanding begins where science leaves

off, and religion meets philosophy, just when the wisest confess themselves baffled and the pride of intellect surrenders to the mystery of life. Jesus never offers Himself as the lesser truth, which is in our power to discover. He is not science nor history nor any social theory—I wonder sometimes if He is even the theology and the orthodoxies of the churches. He was the truth about God in the luminous range of His teaching, which is, in its sure apprehension of the Divine nature, unapproached and unapproachable. His doctrine of God, though His sense of His Father's nearness was no doctrine at all, needs no correction. It is ample enough to contain any contribution of truth from every source; no matter what the future may reveal of vaster sciences and profounder philosophies and demanding and sensitive ethics, the God of Jesus Christ will maintain His sovereignty over faith. He was and is the truth about God also in His revelation of the Father's fullness in Himself. His was more than a shrine in which God dwelt, He was a reality in which God was, and you could say of Him, "If God should come amongst us, He would love as Jesus loved and teach as He taught and serve as He served and lighten our darkness with a quenchless glory as Jesus did."

He was the truth about man. We may justly wonder what we were meant to be, for humanity has been everything from the clay to the saint and we have chosen from amongst us such as might a little typify an ideal humanity, with strange caprice. Our marbles

and bronzes commemorate the conqueror and the martyr, the poet and the artist, the navigators of sea and sky, often the ruler, and sometimes the servant. Our halls of fame are emblazoned with names which are the recitative of greatness, yet of whom in all these shining lists could it be said, "There was and is the Truth, the shadowless splendor of life"?

But Jesus was the Truth. He was the interpreting and illuminating truth which gives meaning to the whole of experience. He was the truth in the wholeness and holiness of His life, in the sure sanity of His mind, in His patience and His courage and His deeper-than-sureness of God.

He was the truth incarnate, for there is no truth like living truth. The knower is always more than his knowledge, the doer than his deed, and until the Word becomes flesh and lives amongst us, it is a ghost or a dream; we see this even amongst ourselves. The test of any life is its degree of right approximation to living truth. Some men are lies, being nothing at all they seem to be, and some are delusions with only a show of reality, and some are little pitiable half-truths. Some are pride or passion. Some are greed or folly, cruelty or beast. Twelve men were gathered together about Him there in that upper room. Was any one of them the truth? Or were Annas and Caiphas plotting against Him with hard faces and harder souls, or Pilate consenting to His death? Were they the truth about life and man and God? But Jesus was the truth.

There, there in that Upper Room, so poor He left nothing for those who nailed Him to the cross but an old garment, so spent He would not presently have strength to bear His cross, self-vowed to a shameful death and holding even His handful of friends by frayed cords soon to be broken, there was the Truth. The truth that the values of the soul are the enduring values, the truth that goodness may transfigure clay, the truth that courage is true and fears are shadows, the truth that love is the only regnancy, the truth that God may own and fill a personality, until a Nazarene carpenter may become Immanuel—God with us. Would you know how nobly life can be lived in straitened circumstances, would you know how duty can arm a soul with a force to rise above every dread, and courage make light of agony, and three loving years justify the travail of creation and an imperial spirit claim the eternal for its portion, read the truth in that life, and having known it make your own lives the re-writing of it.

You may then live as we all live in manifold uncertainties, but you will have in yourself a knowledge of life and its meanings and its issues against which doubt and fear will break as wind-driven clouds against the escarpments of Mt. Blanc.

"I am the way and the truth and the life."

III

Each of these great affirmations meets a supreme need,—ways are for the traveler, truth is for the seeker,

but life? Are we not living now, how is Jesus the life?

This is being written of a June morning light washed and lyric. Suppose you had never seen a tree in leaf, nor any blossoms nor grass nor wheatfields billowed by the wind, but only bare trees stark against stormy skies and the grey hills and sodden fields of March. What would you know of the life of Nature? "If this is life," you would have said in March, "there is nothing here to charge that word with mystery and meaning. If this is life, show me death and tell me how they differ?"

The sun and the season made their answer,—they washed the greys with greens till the hillsides lived again, and starred sheltered banks with shy anemone and set the dandelions' prodigal gold among the grasses. They made the tree tops wraiths of misty green and turned the mists to leaves half open and touched them for a day with colors from last autumn's palette, and made them darker green again and spread them more amply to make their shadows grateful. In blessed steadfast ways each bud and earth-held thing fulfilled its promise until at last, life triumphant, beauty out of barrenness, warmth out of coldness, music out of silence, a tide out of the infinite, made all our mother world its own with ecstasy akin to tears and loveliness beyond a poet's song.

"Spirit immortal of mortality,
Imperishable faith, calm miracle
Of resurrection, truth no tongue can tell,

No brain conceive,—now witnessed utterly
In this New Testament of earth and sea."

This is life. It is the way of God with marred and sleeping things, the golden ripening of the harvest, a power to heal a wound and make a clod a color and a fragrance.

"I am come that they might have life." Here is the answer of Jesus Christ to the ultimate need, the quenchless hunger of the unperfect soul. There is no urge of ours nor any action which is not a quest for life. Lindbergh drawing his arc across the sky from continent to continent, Mallory and Irvine lost on the last storm-possessed crest of Mt. Everest and "when last seen going strong for the top," the trader planning his deals, the scholar reading the records of old Assyria —flaming youth keeping time to jazz and cautious age plodding toward the shadow—all, all are seeking life. In old ways and new, in possessions and understanding, in toil and pleasure, by roads of tragedy and splendor, scourging the flesh or staining the soul, stretching lame hands of faith toward God half guessed or sure in mystic fellowship with Him,

"'Tis life whereof our nerves are scant
Oh life nor death for which we pant
More life and fuller than we have."

"I am the life."

Jesus' gift of life is in the way He offers, since life is an attainment gained by right methods directed toward worthy ends. Its glowing fullnesses of experi-

ence cost disciplines and obediences. We were never made to let the body usurp the kingdom of the spirit and become an end and not a subject agent, nor to be conformed to easy ways. No more do we keep our rendezvous with life in selfish ways or sinful. Hating is not living nor fear and, by the divinest contradiction in all life's wonder, we do not live at all unless we spend ourselves in loving. What we are and have is always a treasure to be used in God's market places for the purchase of another treasure. The cross itself is wood aflame with redeeming love dying that men may live. This is Jesus' way and if we fear it we shall lose even the little we have of it. If we trust it we shall find it the way of life.

The truth which Jesus was and is is life-giving truth. Some truth, though right, is strangely sterile. But there is a truth which transfigures every deed and sustains us in every endeavor and assures us in every sad estate. No human being has ever lived in the light of the entire revelation of Jesus Christ without coming thereby into a fullness of life which is the answer to all questing restlessnesses. Life is always also created by life. I would not press the analogies of the meadow and the seed bed too far. I would turn to another region. Most of us would trace the beginning of the highest in our lives to contact with some enkindling personality. There are always those who, by the grace of God, are so abounding in knowledge or vision or high passion as to change all they touch. They not only reveal but they empower, and having known

them we can no more go in old ignoble ways than a meadow can fail to answer the summons of June.

How they do it does not so much matter. Sometimes their words are live coals off the altar or their deeds a challenge not to leave us cold. More often still what they are, needing no words to tell it but only the radiation of its grace and beauty, shames us into imitation and wakens powers we did not dream we owned till their influence took and changed us. And in this life-enkindling power Jesus stands alone.

> "A star to which, as to a fountain,
> Other stars returning
> In their golden urns draw light."

By His grace and gifts the weak have become strong and the stained have lost their earthiness, the undone have been reëstablished in hope and power, and the graces of Christian character have been made nobly manifest in lives which without Him would have been spent amongst the shadows and lost at last in the dust. The life which Jesus was and offers makes no terms even with death; it belongs to the enduring, it is itself the enduring. "Life," said Thomas Carlyle, sadly, "is a little gleam between two eternities." "Life," said Jesus Christ, triumphantly—and He demonstrated His certainty in His own victory over death —"is a gleam of the eternal beyond the power of death to quench." Life as He reveals and bestows it is ample enough for love to possess its own without any fear of ultimate loss, and hope to shine down endless mount-

ing roads and faith to look unchallenged across the hills of time.

* * *

This, then, is the sermon I would preach if I had but one to preach, and when I had finished I would ask those who heard it to forget how slight a thing it was, for the splendor of the words of Jesus which any sermon can only darken, since they were meant to illumine, not a printed page, but the lives of those for whom, without them, there would be no light at all: "I am the way and the truth and the life."

## Can I Believe in God?

*By* William Pierson Merrill, D.D., brick presbyterian church, new york

*"Believe in God; believe also in me."*
—JOHN XIV – 1

CAN I believe in God?

Some time ago a man with whom I was talking looked me squarely in the eye and said: "I don't really know whether I believe there is a God or not." There was just a shade of defiance in his manner, a bit of over-emphasis. Perhaps he thought that, being a minister, I would be shocked. Of course I was not. No Christian should be shocked when any honest man gives frank expression to anything he honestly thinks. Would to God more people told the exact truth when they talk to ministers! But I was deeply interested. This man was one who had had unusual opportunities, a thorough education, a Christian home, the best of influences about him. I happen to know that he prays, attends church regularly, and is faithful in the discharge of all common religious duties. The incident set me to wondering how many there may be, right inside the church itself, who would find it hard to profess with utter honesty a thorough-going belief in God. I am talking to such now.

## CAN I BELIEVE IN GOD?

Can I believe in God? Where is He? What is He? How can I be sure of Him? How much of what preachers and poets say of Him is real, and how much is just beautiful myth and fairy tale, pleasant to believe, but unable to stand the test of fact? In one of his delightful scenes, Barrie shows us a Scottish lad, a student from Aberdeen University, acting as guide to a party visiting an island where fairies are popularly supposed to live. He shows some reluctance to step ashore, and they ask him, in merry mockery, "Do you believe in fairies?" He answers, "When the cold light of reason plays about me in Aberdeen, I don't believe in fairies. But here" ——. I wonder how many there are who have a haunting sense of a dim presence, a kind of wonder if God is real, when they sit in a church amid hallowed association, with music and worship and confident words from the pulpit, but lose that sense of God's reality when the cold light of facts begins to play upon them in the great, busy world outside!

No one of us is fair to the soul of our time, or to the men and women who are alive today, who fails to appreciate how hard it is for thoughtful people to have a real, satisfying faith in the Unseen God. Many causes combine to make it hard to believe, too many for us even to take time to name them. Below them all is the one great, overwhelming fact, that our sense of the universe, of its immensity, and our nothingness, is utterly different from that which men had in days when the stars were lamps hung in the earth's vaulted

ceiling. All the vast expansion of modern science, and the rush of philosophy to keep pace with it, all the development of psychology which tempts us to reduce religion to subjective processes, these and other facts or factors of our day intensify enormously the problem of belief. Rightly seen and handled they make faith more sure. But they are being wrongly handled by many attractive teachers. Moreover when religion and theology would expand to match the growth of knowledge, a host of good little souls clutch frantically at them and hold them back, crying out that religion is lost if it changes its clothes.

Can I believe in God?

This is the deepest of all religious questions. Fundamentally, faith in God is what men need, what we must have, if we are to have our religion, and live our life. What can an honest preacher say to an honest doubter about this most basic of all questions?

First of all, I say, *Be sure you ask the question in the right way. Can* I believe in God? Not *must* I? You approach the matter wrongly when you demand irresistible proof. You are right to demand that God come to you with a sense of reality. What you want is belief, not make-believe. But you have no right to ask for more than evidence, or argument, or proof of whatever sort, sufficient to give you the right to believe in God. Spite of doubts, and difficulties, and dark areas, and blind spots, can I honestly believe in God? That is the question. It implies that you

want to believe, if you can honestly. Why not? Who that was in his right mind ever preferred doubt to faith?

Get the question thus by the right end, and the answer may begin to take shape. The next step is to ask, what do you mean by the word "God"? It is a name for Some One, something, is it not? What is the *reality* you are trying to describe by the use of that name?

That simple inquiry touches the heart of the difficulty in many cases. The man of whom I spoke at the outset, whose statement of doubt about God started my thoughts along this line, was a little perplexed, perhaps a little surprised, when I replied by asking him what he meant by the word "God." It did not take long to discover that he thought I, and other preachers, believed in a sort of mysterious Being, sitting somewhere in the Heavens, ready to do all sorts of strange, inexplicable things, a kind of glorified Big Man.

It is not strange that he thought so. We have to picture God to ourselves as like ourselves. The central article of Christian faith is that when God would show us what He really is, He did it through a human being. One of the wisest words ever spoken is John Fiske's saying, "To every sound form of theism an anthropomorphic element is indispensable." Putting that in common language it means that, if we are to think of God at all in any real way, we must think of Him as like the spirit of man.

Yet the question whether or no one believes in God goes far deeper than that. We know that God is not just "an infinite Lord Shaftesbury," as Matthew Arnold keenly expressed it. We have to think of Him in that way, but He is far beyond our thoughts. No intelligent Christian believer would now say that faith in God means a belief that somewhere sits Some One on a throne, Whom we might see if we could get near enough. The mind of today rightly casts off such childishness.

This is the real matter at issue, is it not?—What are we to think of that ultimate reality with which we have to do? What is the final, basic truth about the nature of things? What lies back of all this which we call life, its true cause, its truest explanation? That is the real question about God. What I say in answer to that decides whether I am a believer or an unbeliever in God.

There are three attitudes one can take toward that ultimate reality, or source, or explanation of things. Oh, of course there are many more, an infinite number of shades of thought and belief and fancy. But on the whole it is true that men and women of today fall into three classes, take one of three positions. They are agnostics, or materialists, or theists.

It is easy to be an agnostic. It is fashionable to be an agnostic, though it is becoming less so. But, like most easy and fashionable courses, it is unworthy. The religious agnostic dodges the issue, instead of meeting it.

Words of course are tricky things. There is an agnosticism which is worthy and true, a reverent confession of the littleness of our minds, and of the deep and unfathomable mystery that lies all around us. But the agnosticism I have in mind is that which says dogmatically, "God is unknowable, and therefore I will stop thinking of Him or taking Him into the account." It shows itself practically in the conviction that it is a waste of time and breath to try to get at the truth about God; and that therefore religion is of slight practical importance.

This is the fault I find with that sort of agnostic,—that he does not go far enough. He makes an arbitrary distinction. He acts with regard to religious truth as he would not dream of acting with regard to other truth. The thorough-going agnostic would not only give up religion; he would abandon science, and every attempt to know; he would just sit in the shadow of all-surrounding mystery, saying, "I don't know," to every fact and duty and interest.

In a great, majestic sense God *is* unknowable. But so is all ultimate truth. Who knows what life is, what electricity is, what matter is, what personality is?

"We walk in a world where no man reads the riddle of things that are."

But this is what sensible men do, in any and every part of life, when baffled by their inability to know the ultimate truth: they make what scientists call a

"working hypothesis." That is, they form an *idea* of what that ultimate reality may be, an idea that harmonizes as fully as possible with known facts, and then they act as if the unknown reality were really like that idea. Why not do that in religion, as well as in other parts of our thinking and living? In order to right living, in order to give force and validity to our moral standards, in order to go through life with some comfort and joy and assurance, in order to give full value to our spiritual assets, to faith and hope and love and righteousness, we need a working idea of the nature of ultimate reality. Because we need it, we take it and use it with confidence, just as the scientist uses his idea of light, or electricity, or of the atom. Without his hypothesis, he could have no science. Without our idea of God, we could have no religion. We need religion, as we need science. And the idea, or hypothesis, is as necessary and as reliable in the one case as in the other.

So much for the Agnostic. The real issue of faith is between the other two attitudes, between the Materialist and the Theist. I wish, we could use the word "Spiritualist" as the antithesis of "Materialist." I wish that word had not become popularly identified with tricks done in the dark.

This is the real question about God: which is the ultimate reality, the final explanation of things, the true source and meaning of life, impersonal matter, or personal spirit? Which is the better, truer way to think of that which lies back of life, and accounts

for what it is? Is all of life just a manifestation of force? The mind of Shakespeare, the soul of Lincoln, the thoughts of Plato, the music of Beethoven, the spirit of Jesus,—are these just by-products of the working of chemical and physical forces? Has all the wonder of love and beauty and joy and unselfishness come to be through "the fortuitous concourse of atoms"? Can the love of the mother for her child, of the patriot for his country, of Christ for His own, be accounted for reasonably and sufficiently by the laws of chemical and physical action and reaction?

Or is *personality* the ultimate *reality* and power and glory of the world? Despite all that seems at strife with it, the pull of the senses, the absence of laboratory tests, the presence of evil and cruelty and seeming stupidity and aimlessness in the very processes of life, in spite of it all,—does not *the personal* still stand out so glorious, so sure, so unapproachable, that nothing less than personality can account for things as they are? Is it not more credible to hold that all the wonder of this universe of law, all the beauty, and truth, and goodness, and with it all the dirt and slime and scum, account for its presence as we may, came out of something like our thought and intelligence, our will and freedom, our love and vision, than that all the charm and loveliness and vivid reality of the personal came by a sort of magic good luck out of a blind man's buff of mechanical forces?

Alfred Noyes puts it well in his noble epic poem, "Watchers of the Sky," when he makes Kepler say,

"Even your Atheist builds his doubt
On that strange faith; destroys his heaven and God
In absolute faith that his own thought is true
To law, God's lantern to our stumbling feet;
And so, despite himself, he worships God,
For where true souls are, there are God and heaven.
And yet—to hear
Those wittols talk, you'd think you'd but to mix
A bushel of good Greek letters in a sack
And shake them roundly for an age or so,
To pour the Odyssey out. At last I told
Those disputants what my wife had said, one night,
When I was tired and all my mind a-dust,
With pondering on their atoms. I was called
To supper, and she placed before me there
A most delicious salad. 'It would appear'
I thought aloud, 'that if these pewter dishes,
Green hearts of lettuce, terragon, slips of thyme,
Slices of hard-boiled egg, and grains of salt,
With drops of water, vinegar and oil,
Had in a bottomless gulf been flying about
From all eternity, one sure certain day
The sweet invisible hand of Happy Chance
Would serve them as a salad.'
'Likely enough,'
My wife replied, 'but not so good as mine.'"

There it is! If man's intelligence can do so much, range so far, must not that out of which he has come be at least great enough to account for his thought? If love is so much the greatest thing in the world, can the cause and nature and ultimate explanation of

the world be less than loving? If personality is the best I know, dare I call God less? And if I do not call Him personal, I call Him something less. For there is nothing greater or better by which we may call Him.

Now this is what we need to know and see clearly, that, in the last analysis, the question whether one believes in God is answered by the view he takes of the ultimate reality of things. If one believes that intangible, spiritual assets are more valuable than all outward things, that personality is incomparably above mechanism, that beauty, truth, and goodness are the real goods of life, that man is a spirit and not a mere intricate machine, then he believes in God, or at any rate is ready to believe in God. For it is utterly inconsistent to be a materialist and yet put love first. "Where love is, there God is also." To believe in the supremacy of the spiritual is to have a real faith in God.

They are bound together, God and the soul, God and beauty, God and truth, God and goodness, God and the personal values of living. If these are real, God is real. If God is a delusion, then these are delusions. Of all amazing follies, of all incredible egotisms, what one can be greater than that which sets man's soul all alone, alone intelligent, alone good, in a mechanical universe? Bertrand Russell is a great mathematician. But when he declares, on the sheer evidence of the senses, that man's "origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but

the outcome of accidental collocation of atoms; that all the labors of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius are destined to extinction in the vast depth of the solar system";—when he says that, he is a poor, pitiful fool, like Plato's cave-man, dwelling amid shadows and refusing to believe in the light. How keen and sharp is the sarcasm in the words which Henry Adams makes the materialist use in addressing his real god, the dynamo:

> "Be you matter, be you mind,
> We think we know that you are blind,
> And we alone are good."

"We alone are good." What an insult to the Maker and Cause of all! Shall the thing made deny prevision and skill to the mind and hand that has made it?

A man once told me of how he struggled with doubt when his little child was taken by death. A devout friend said something to him about seeing his dear one again. "Yes," he answered, "*if* I see him again." Surprised and shocked, his friend asked, "But do you doubt it?" "I did doubt it," he said, "and I went off by myself and faced that doubt. I said to myself 'I want the truth, and nothing else.' Then I said to my doubt, 'Very well, I will take *you* as the truth. I shall never see him again. That is all over forever. Death ends it all. Then there is no God and Father. Love is not the ultimate reality. Then, my love for

my child was a delusion. But, O God, I *know* I love my child. I know that is part of the best that is in me. I *know* that is real, whatever else is in doubt.' And," said he, "with that, faith came flooding back, and I saw that God is, and that He is love. I could not live with my doubt. I could not live without that faith."

Can I believe in God? You do not have to. Nothing can compel you to believe in Him. There's not an argument that cannot be doubted, not a fact that has not a counter fact. But woven in with that belief in God are all the sweet, tender, glorious values of human life. And because we cannot live without these, we cannot live without God.

I know little about electricity. I go to an Edison, a Pupin, and what he tells me confuses rather than enlightens. Nay, these men themselves confess they do not know what electricity is. But I enter my home, and, if the hall is dark, I press a button and radiance is all around me because I use what these men have found out. The unknown, the unknowable, is lighting my home. I do not know what God is. I go to the Theologians, and what they say confuses rather than enlightens. Nay, the wisest of them confess how little they know, how their definitions break down. But in the dark, I turn to God in the simplest, best ways men have found for bringing Him near and making Him real; I call Him "Father," as Jesus tells me to do; and light shines; and

"Out of darkness come the hands
That reach through nature, moulding men."

Here, O men and women who would serve well your world, here is the battle-ground on which must be fought out today the good fight of faith, here in the conflict between those who say that the physical is the only real and those who hold that the spiritual is the supreme reality. We must believe in God, with all the strength of our souls. And we must believe in God for the same reason that makes the scientist believe in the laws of nature, and the mathematician in his axioms,—that he cannot do without them. That which is necessary to make goodness valid, and beauty deathless, and truth sure, and love real, and life a spiritual experience rather than a mechanical process, has a right to command our full, glad faith. And God, the Living God, Whom we know in life and in the Bible, claims our faith because we cannot do without Him, because the supreme realities fade into unrealities without Him.

There is more. There is Christ. "Believe in God; believe also in me." If God is to make very sure to us that He is personal, how can He do it really, fully, perfectly, save through personality? What can more conclusively and triumphantly confirm our faith that God is wisdom and love and spirit,—more like us than like anything else that He has made, than the appearing in history of one in whom all the best that is in humanity comes to ideal expression, in whom

we see personality in its richest, fullest, most perfect demonstration? It is through faith in Him that we come most surely to faith in God. "I am the way, the truth, and the life." That is what He says, and we know it is true. He who is Son of Man and Son of God, truly one with us, gloriously one with God, what we would be if we could, what we would know if we could know God, says to us, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." He who has seen Christ, has seen goodness, love, personality, at their highest. And he who has seen goodness, love, personality, at their highest, has seen God. There our souls may rest, able to face life with serene confidence, and to "endure as seeing Him Who is invisible."

## Christ, Priest and Victim

*By* His Eminence William Cardinal O'Connell,
archbishop of boston

IN THIS age of unbelief, when men's spiritual eyes have shrunk to the dimensions of the eyes of their body, and reason, human and finite, dares to measure and confine the limits of the mercy and power of a God whose name is Infinite, it is indeed a pleasant thought to consider that our Church, the Catholic Church, is at least one organization that sets its foot upon the serpent of incredulity and raising its banner of faith high over the petty pennants of conflicting sects whose motto is "I think," she unfurls its colors to the gaze of men and angels with one word indelible and brightly emblazoned upon it, "I believe."

Speak of God to a man of our times who is versed in the fashionable scepticism of the day, and he shrugs his shoulders and mumbles something about the unknowable and the unknown. But the Catholic to whom that Name is sacred feels in the depths of his soul the sacredness of the thought of his Creator, his Father. This is faith. Tell your rationalist of the story of the Incarnation of God's son, and His sufferings for our redemption, and the only heights to which his soul arises is six feet from the earth; he

speaks of the perfect type of humanity which Christ represented. Nothing more. But at the mention of Christ's Sacred Name, the Catholic bows his head and his soul is filled with anguish at the bare thought of Calvary, and with supreme gratitude as the scene of the resurrection succeeds the awful death on the Cross at Golgotha. This again is faith. Speak to yon enlightened reasoner of the nineteenth century of prayer and reparation for sin, and in his pity for your weakmindedness he will endeavor to conceal the smile that rises upon his lips, and he will remind you that the age of superstition has gone by. But the Catholic recalls with fervor those hours of holy commune with his God, when as he knelt with bowed head and broken spirit before the altar of sacrifice he knew that he was near his God, he felt the calm of His Presence and the sweet soft tones of forgiveness in his ear, and the healing balm of His forgiving touch upon his soul. He recalls the sight of his Sacramental Lord in the Sacred Host raised high above his head, as in a voice that goes out from his innermost heart he cries out, "Receive, O God, this pure oblation in the remission of my manifold sins." This is faith, sublime faith, that, thank God, still holds sway in our Holy Church, and which, like a beautiful flower, amid the thick rank growth of stunted weeds, appears from its very surrounding only the more beautiful, the more radiant, the more fragrant.

As we belong to that Church we must have faith—faith in the word of God, faith in His truthful prom-

ises, faith in the unseen presence of Him who guides our steps and leads us by the hand through time to eternity. As the organs of the body so the faculties of the soul need exercise in order to bring them to maturity of strength and development. That exercise as Christians we are bound to give our spiritual faculties, for as St. Paul says, the just live by faith. In every action of our lives, in every season of our existence, we have ample field for the use of the powers of our soul. In the blossoming of the fields, besides the laws of nature that regulate the growth of plants, which is all that the scientist sees, the Christian recognizes the prime Giver of increase and plenty. In the heavenly motion of the spheres, besides the laws that govern the movements of the stars and planets which the astronomer teaches, the Christian beholds revealed the finger of God that governs the universe. Besides nature, the hidden truths of religion claim our faith. The same Person that walks in the streets of lowly Galilee is called by the Jews and Pharisees, Jesus the son of Joseph the carpenter, and by those from whose eyes have fallen the scales of unbelief Jesus the Son of God. Even as the God-Man hangs upon the gibbet on Calvary, on one side is the unbeliever, the thief who sees only the fellow culprit, and on the other, the believer, the one who sees the innocent victim, the world's Redeemer under the guise of a malefactor. The Divinity veiled under the Humanity of Christ called forth the exercise of faith of those with whom He dwelt, and today we too recognize in

the humble Nazarene the God that made us and the Saviour that redeemed us. Surer than the testimony of sense, clearer than the light that makes things visible to mortal eyes, more certain than the knowledge that comes to us by sight or touch, we know that God is Man, and that the Almighty, that He might lift up man, assumed our humanity. This is the victory that overcomes the world—our Faith.

If our faith is called forth into action, if our belief in God is roused from its dormant state in our souls into active exercise by the consideration of Christ offering Himself for man on Calvary, much more is it stimulated by the consideration of that same sacrifice on the altar in the Mass, which is but the repetition of the Crucifixion. The Priest is the same, the Victim is the same. Christ on the first Good Friday raised between earth and heaven, between man and God, stretched out His arms over the world and cried to His heavenly Father, "Receive, O God, this sacrifice and forgive mankind its sin." On the Altar Christ too, as He is raised on high in mystic oblation, repeats the self-same words: "Behold me, Father, a pure sacrifice to thy Justice. Blot out the sins of Thy people and forget their iniquities against Thy Holy Name."

Therefore at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass we may exercise our faith even more meritoriously than if we had been witnesses of the Crucifixion. For there, as St. Thomas says, the Divinity was concealed under the Humanity. But that same humanity had worked

such miracles as would have convinced any one but the wrong-hearted and blinded Jews. Whereas in the Sacrifice of the Mass, both Divinity and Humanity are veiled under the humble appearances of bread and wine, and we hear only the words of Christ echoed through nineteen centuries, "This is my Body. This is my Blood," and we believe the words because He who speaks them is the All-Holy God.

With the eyes of our souls, therefore, well opened to the light of this saving faith, let us consider what is this act of worship which we call the Mass. It is a Sacrifice. Since sacrifice implies the immolation to God of some offering by one consecrated to act as mediator between heaven and earth, we must seek therefore in the Mass, who is the priest, who is our mediator, and what is the victim that He offers? Who is He who, vested with our humanity, raises His consecrated hands to God in supplication for our sins? Jesus Christ, the anointed of the Father, the great High Priest from whose priesthood all others derive their efficacy and power; Jesus Christ, the only begotten of the All-Holy God, who at the moment of His conception became King, Priest, and Victim; Jesus Christ, upon whom the Father poured out the oil of sacerdotal power and the ointment of eternal priesthood, saying to Him, "Thou art a priest forever, according to the order of Melchisedec." As Melchisedec offered the sacrifice of bread and wine, so Christ the great High Priest offers daily upon our altar the Sacrifice of Infinite value that veils itself under the ap-

pearance of bread and wine. In the chaste womb of His Virgin Mother, as in the chosen Temple of God, by the ordinance of God, and by the divine hand of the Eternal in the very act of the Incarnation, He was constituted the head, the representative, the priest of the human race, to govern, to teach it in all things that appertain to God and to offer up to the adorable Trinity in the name of the human race, for its salvation and happiness, a sacrifice truly worthy, an acceptable act of adoration, thanksgiving and redemption.

Once upon Calvary He performed the great functions of His office, as the light faded from His eyes, as a shiver of death shook His wounded frame, and in the last anguish of more than mortal agony He cried, "Into thy hands I commend my spirit." The Crucifixion was the Great High Mass, from which all others have their efficacy.

Surely as the Sacrifice of the Cross was sufficient to blot out the stains upon the souls of all mankind from Adam down to the last man that shall live upon this earth, just so surely is the Sacrifice of the Altar sufficient to apply the merits of that first Sacrifice to the needs of the individual sinner.

Moreover, as the merits of the Sacrifice of Calvary were infinite, those of the Mass are no less so; for the Priest is Christ, and the Victim is Christ, and Christ is infinite God, and infinite Saviour. There is nothing wanting in the gift that is offered upon the Altar: it is perfect with the perfection of God Himself, and He who offers it is no mere human being. The priest

that we see at the Altar is, it is true, the minister of Christ, and represents Him before the eyes of the people. He prepares the offering for the sacrifice; he stands before the people and for the people, in God's name; he invites them to join with him in begging God to prepare them and him for the august mysteries; he places the bread upon the altar and the wine in the sacred chalice—that bread and wine soon to become only the veil of the Living Christ, God and Man, hiding Him from our mortal eyes which could not, except in Heaven, look upon Him and live.

Then at the solemn moment in the silence, the human priest pronounces the awful words over the elements, and now no more is the man the chief ministrant, but Jesus Christ Himself is here, Body and Soul and Divinity. Christ stands at the altar between you and God; between your sins and God's justice; between your weakness and God's strength. There He stands as really as the human priest that is visible to your natural eyes: invisible to us, but visible gloriously to the myriads of Saints and Angels who in His Sacred Presence sing the rapturous hymn of everlasting praise—"Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts; Heaven and earth are filled with Thy Glory: Hosanna in the highest."

He Himself comes to offer sacrifice; for what man is worthy of his own merits to stand as Mediator before the Eternal All-Holy God, except Him whose soul is without spot, because it is the Soul of God; and whose

Body, assumed from an Immaculate Virgin, is the fitting tenement of such a soul?

Because this great Priest looks abroad over creation and can find no gift worthy to offer to the Eternal Father as an adequate act of adoration and supplication, lo, He offers Himself. "Sacrifice and oblation," He says, "Thou would'st not; but a Body thou hast fitted for me: Then said I, Behold I come." O Christians, as the bell sounds out the tidings, and you bow before the elevation of the Sacred Host, ponder well in your hearts this sacred truth. Christ is here! He stands at the Altar, the great High Priest of the Universe, and pours out before God's offended Majesty that Blood which was spilt on Calvary; which redeemed the world; which opened Heaven; which triumphed over the gates of Hell; which made grace much more abound where once sin abounded; which cleanses sinners, and perfects saints! That Priest is my God: that Victim is my Saviour! That sacrifice of infinite value is all for me; that I, the child of sin, may be the very child of God; that my soul grown old in vice may return again to the innocence of my Baptism, may be renewed as it was before the world, the flesh and the Devil had made me the sinner that I am.

Now Christians, while Christ is with you, not as the injured God, but as the Priest pleading for your forgiveness, seize the opportunity to beg of Him what most your soul needs. Grasp the hem of His garment, and do not let Him go till He has blessed you.

What if it were the last time you were to kneel in His Presence on Earth! Would you not cry out with all the fervor of your being, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on me, for I am a sinner! Give me back Thy love, Thy grace, which I have forfeited. I am sick of sin: my soul is weary of guilt: the burden of my iniquity is too great for me to bear. I feel it weighing me down, sinking me fast toward Hell. Stretch out thy right hand and save me. Jesus, Victim of love, help me. Lord, save me: I perish."

Look up, Christian soul, to the Altar where Jesus reigns; for even now He hears your cry and has sent forth strength to your soul. In union with Him offer to God all that is best in your possession—your soul freed from guilt, your heart purified from the love of sinful pleasure, your mind and all its faculties, your body and all its members. In spirit lay them all upon the Altar where Jesus is Royal Priest and Victim; and in return ask of Him, the most precious gift in all Creation, His own Divine Self.

This, O Christians, is what the Mass is—the highest and most exalted act of worship, the sublime Sacrifice in which God offers to God a Victim-God, and you who are present join in the offering, and reap the inestimable benefits of the Sacrifice of Calvary.

Where upon the earth can such worship be found except in the Church which Christ established? What treasure is there in the universe of such incomparable value as a single Mass? And yet how incredible, how appalling the coldness, the lukewarmness, the sloth,

the indifference of Catholics! If for one moment the veil were lifted from our eyes, and we saw what in reality the Mass is, we should be overwhelmed with wonder and gratitude. If we are not, it is because our faith is dead, our souls divided, our minds pre-occupied; because we do not forget the human, frail, mortal priest, in the over-powering consideration of the spotless, Divine Eternal One; nor merge the whole outward ceremonial in the awful reality of the Divine Victim and the ineffable drama of our redemption.

Open wide, then, the eyes of the soul. Lay aside for the moment all thoughts of care and trouble; and ocme to the Holy Sacrifice as the early Christians did with hearts full of awe and love and devotion; for He who on the Altar as on Calvary is both Priest and Victim, is also the Eternal King of Heaven.

## The Perfect Salvation

*By* Merton S. Rice, D.D., metropolitan methodist episcopal church, detroit

*"Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in Whom we trust that He will yet deliver us."*

—II cor. 1–10

I HAVE never heard a sermon from this verse. I have not in any of my sermonic literature a sermon based upon it. In the commentaries I have at my disposal all the comment I have been able to find has been, that this was a difficult passage, which so far as I am able to make out is no particular distinguishment these days. But here stands this fine verse in the homiletic fascination of a self-analyzed passage, carrying all those great throbs of Christian memory and experience and hope, which are the most preachable matters of our faith.

The second Book of Corinthians opens with a most gracious salutation. It bears the message of comfort in a manner most impressive. I incline to feel that the whole book catches its flavor at its very beginning. Paul was making clear the fact of the experience of real comfort and help in distress, and the obligated helpfulness which such an experience put upon those who had it. I am ready to say, after an experience in the ministry running through more than thirty years,

and furnishing a cross section of service from the humblest country circuit to the most complex demands of the metropolitan situation, I am ready to say that the prime test of a genuine religion is its ability to stand in the midst of great trouble and of deep liability and bring actual comfort. The Apostle Paul was close to his very best, when with his great pen dripping the flavor of his soul's richest knowledge, he wrote here this great preceding verse, "The God of all comfort, who comforted us in all our tribulations, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." That great verse has come down the ages in constant accumulation of its beautiful meaning. I well remember when first I came to realize its worth. One of the memorably challenging moments of my ministry took its stand right here. A big strong man had fallen by a sudden stroke. He was a father upon whose strong service a large family depended. The mother and nine children were left. It hurt us all as we gathered in the stricken home, and we eagerly sought for every helpfulness we knew. Two weeks later the mother, in the price of a yet multiplied motherhood, broken in her grief beyond the demand of her strength, likewise fell before the grim sickle. There stood those huddling children alone. They lived on a farm. There was a heavy mortgage clinging to it. I turned to this great verse and sought for some words to say as nearly a Christian thing as I could say that difficult day. All

the crowding farmer-folk who came pressing into that grief-filled house were broken of heart, but determined of soul. Not one hand was withheld. Not one heart was unmoved. We did try to comfort them with the comfort we too had found. It challenged all the religious helpfulness we had. I went to see the man who held the mortgage. It was a heavy mortgage for such a farm. But he was a man, and a Christian. This same great verse was ringing in his soul. He said to me as I opened the door of his office and before I could tell my mission, "Don't worry about that mortgage." And that fine group of grief-bound children, strengthened by the offered comfort of those to whom the faith had been helpful, worked their way out of it all to a great victory. They paid that mortgage. They preserved their home. I never rode down that country way, and failed to look toward that farm and pray for them.

Out across the years comes this fine passage here, laden with such comfort and blessed by accumulated memories. That was what was in the heart of the author of our text when he wrote this whole book of saturate comfort about the God of all comfort. Then he goes on to tell of a most desperate experience through which he has just passed. He was almost dead. He had never told them about it. I was given up to die while in Asia. I was pressed out of measure, pressed even beyond my strength. My life was despaired of. Everyone gave up hope. Then he writes in this very great and refreshing verse.

Through all this he declares he learned to trust in God, "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver; in whom we trust that He will yet deliver us."

Note the comprehensive statement of the perfect salvation which God has prepared for those who trust Him. Who did deliver us! The testimony of memory, the sure evidence from the past. Who doth deliver us! The satisfied declaration of experience. The evidence of the present. Who will deliver us! The confidence for the future. The assurance of our hope. It would be impossible to find a verse more beautifully self-analyzed, or more homiletically perfect in its statement of our satisfactory faith. The Perfect Salvation. God who did deliver us, who does deliver us, who will deliver us. For the past I am grateful. For the present I am satisfied. For the future I am confident. I would write this great fact in terms of real experience into all our lives.

1. Who did deliver us. Thank God for the vigorous testimony brought by memory in confirmation of our faith out of an eloquent past. If I were confined to personal terms in the telling of this great story I could bring from the archives of all our lives the full confirmation of this claim. Doubtless in one way that is a matter in which all of God's people should be finding a continuous satisfaction. It is, to be exact, the very application Paul was making as the basis of this great declaration of the text. He was building

his great heartening message to all Christendom upon the satisfactory experience through which he had passed. He saved me.

But there is always a way in which every personal thing overleaps every personal horizon, and becomes a great declaration for general testimony. When one speaks of the past in terms of religion he must touch a large range. The testimony of the satisfactory service of a God who did deliver, is a matter that carries age-over meaning. It is confirmed by the prophets and saints of old. It takes its place in an unbroken line back into all the past can be made to mean.

Thank God for the faith that has come down the ages to bring us assurance now. How nobly it has come. Nothing has been able to turn it back. When we speak of the past out of which triumphantly our faith has come on, we cannot imagine any test that has not already been met. We read and read and read again, that never-tiring, always refreshing heroic chapter in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and rejoice in the noble company who shout their convincing stories across the ages. By faith Abel, and Enoch, and Noah, and Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and Joseph, and Moses, and Gideon, and Barak, and Samson, and Jephthae, and David. And, oh, such a great and inspiring army, for whose names there was not room. Victors across life's most severe trials. They subdued kingdoms; wrought righteousness; obtained

promises; stopped the mouths of lions; quenched the violence of fire; escaped the edge of the sword; out of weakness became strong; waxed valiant in fight; turned to flight the armies of the aliens; received their dead raised to life again; were tortured not accepting deliverance, thus obtaining even a better resurrection; had trials of cruel mocking and scourgings; were bound and imprisoned. They were stoned. They were sawn asunder. They were tempted. They were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheep-skins and in goat-skins. They were destitute, afflicted, tormented. The world was not worthy of these. They wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. These all having obtained a good report through faith received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us that they without us should not be made perfect. Thus we read the heroic chapter, and refresh our faith today in the fadeless story of yesterday. We thank God for the great list, this side of which we take our stand with a courage that draws new strength from all those who have gone on before us. We do not believe the great chapter was completed when the list as recorded in the Book was made. We believe the very same inheritance of that very same experience has been recorded right along down the unbroken story of the Church of God. The same deliverance that was made glorious by their stories has not failed even until now, and we tune our song to all the saints forever ——

"For all the saints, who from their labours rest,
Who Thee by faith before the world confessed,
Thy name, O Jesus, be forever blessed,
Hallalujah!

"Thou wast their rock, their fortress, and their might,
Thou, Lord, their Captain in the well fought fight,
Thou in the darkness drear, their one true light,
Hallalujah!

"From earth's wide bounds, from ocean's farthest coast,
Through gates of pearl, streams in the countless host,
Singing to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Hallalujah!"

Oh, Church of God, we should make sure to write the unbroken list of triumphant deliverance right down to our own day. Thanks be unto God, who did deliver us. On every page of the great story thus far written stands the unbroken record of this thrilling fact. We cannot read back into it without the quickening pulse of our own purpose being roused within us.

How many, many times we have gone to that strange and surcharged spot on the banks of the Tyne at Jarrow. The sacred influence of the Venerable Bede has gripped the souls of thousands. There stands in sacred treasure the old chair in which he sat while he made the famous translation that lingers yet to testify to his name. From it we can almost see him, frail but mighty as he arose for the last time to speak the final words of the beautiful gospel of St. John,

and then sank to his knees to die. Then to Durham we go to look again at that strange massive coffin, a magnetic center of our interest. Made out of one great oaken log, and mounted on four crude rough wheels. In that shared coffin you remember they placed the bodies of both Bede and Cuthbert, and when days of great crisis arose, those people who loved their great leaders, would wheel those bodies about, that the sacred influence of the characters they seemed to make real among them, might again lend aid in the great test. Howsoever all such superstition may sound now to us in this proud day of far advanced enlightenment, there nevertheless does come still to all of us the sacred strength of the precious past. We know those victories. We know those deliverances. We do take courage. We do believe by them now. We would wheel out with us as we go, all the sacred memories of all those, down all the long way, who have come through everything life and death can mean; and above their memories, and established in the confidences of their victories would shout, Thanks be unto God, Who did deliver us from so great a death.

2. Who does deliver us. Our salvation is not a mere matter of memory. It does not ground itself alone upon the past. It is not a preservation. It is an experience now. He does deliver us.

We have never been able to recognize the real value and power of history as it is being written. Today never seems as wonderful and conclusive as does

yesterday. Nor does it seem so luring, or full of hope as does tomorrow. There is a strange tendency in all of us to look behind or ahead of us for real inspiration. Remembering things that are gone, and pressing toward those things that are before, we easily forget that we are engaged in the actual encounter of today. These streets we know are so hard. These days are so strenuous. These heart-aches are so very painful. These sorrows are so real. These temptations are so very trying. Oh, today, today, is a heavy struggling hour for sure. Our feet are weary. Our hearts are heavy. Our souls are bowed down. We are actually engaged with life just as it is. There is always some sweet forgetfulness of the past, which seems to bury from our real appreciation much that made it hard, and to leave for us to cherish only the residue of helpfulness of it all. But oh this hard today! It lacks romance in the rigid reality of it all. We know it so well. The sun of noon. The weariness of the flesh. The strain of soul. This is life just now.

This great verse struck in here from the immediate triumphant experience of Paul, was offered to those brethren, and was set glowing to all who should come afterward, as a precious possession of all the Church forever at the exact point of present requirement. My God doth deliver me now. That is exactly up to the last minute. Religion's immediate help. No excuses are made. No reservations are required. Life is met just as it is. There can be no more vital word

to get said to this day of ours than that. Our religion is not a mere matter of history, neither is it a matter of persistent hope. For history and hope, both and each, we are grateful. But experience, as the present opportunity of life, we are glad for. We are in step with life now. God is still with His people.

> "A mighty fortress is our God,
> A bulwark never failing."

God does deliver us now. Upon the strong emphasis of this immediate experience almost every great forward movement in the Church's history has been founded. The theology which has attended the great revivals has always been that which has been cast into the alembic of experience. It has been tried by the hard-edged challenge of the life about it. It demands a creed that can accompany courage. It must stand victoriously in the midst of life.

One night that rugged and wonderful worker among men whose lives had been broken by sin, Sam Hadley, was speaking to a large gathering of poor wrecks who had come into the doors of his mission hall. A trained physician sat among the men as an observer of a condition which drew him merely out of curiosity. The vigorous appeal of the preacher for immediate decision for a new life finally so impressed the physician that he could not restrain the protest of his scientific objection to it all, and he arose and speaking feelingly said, "Mr. Hadley, you have been appealing here with a glowing passion to these drunkards

for a new and a made-over life. I speak as a physician to say that you would not talk to these men thus if you had ever seen what the inside of a drunkard's stomach looks like." As quick as a flash from the experience which was the basis of all the great mission worker's preaching, he replied, "Sir, I had a drunkard's stomach and Jesus Christ saved me from it, and saves me from it now." How eloquently does genuine experience always meet life. We challenge the whole world with the testimony of this salvation. It is the most convincing preachment we have. Oh for a witnessing Church. Your experience! Don't leave it out. Who doth deliver us. We have a salvation that meets life actually. We are not compelled to make one exception. "Come unto Me, all ye." Oh write that across life. Write it across life everywhere in the terms of your own experience. Write it against hardship. Write it against ease. Write it against sorrow. Write it against joy. Write it against old age. Write it against youth. Write it against life. Write it against death. Who doth deliver us. Thank God.

3. Who will deliver us. Hope and the future. We have already come on past enough to warrant us in an on-reaching conclusion that will not turn back however far life may have yet to run. We have read enough history to vindicate the confidence we profess. The race has certainly come on through convincing experience. We have ourselves individually

met life in such complicate situations that we feel sure of our right to draw our conclusions.

We lift now our faces toward the great tomorrow. We are not troubled. We are not afraid. He will deliver us. This is the face-forward confidence of our religion.

There is a very satisfactory privilege opened to us to look back through all life has thus far meant. We have God's word to cover it all. I thank God every day of my life for what I have come safely past.

> "Thus far the Lord hath led me on,
> Thus far His power prolongs my days;
> And every evening shall make known,
> Some fresh memorial of His grace."

There is likewise a secure confidence I feel in the fact of today's experience. I know Him as my salvation now. This is indeed a testing day. Life runs at me a-flood now. Dangers are all about me. It does require the genuine power of a real faith to stand victorious now. But I am confident in this very significant day and hour to announce this Christian sufficiency.

Upon all life has been and is, I have built up in my soul an unshakable faith for the future. He will deliver me. I believe I know somewhat the meaning of such a declaration as that. There is much ahead. Life may even yet have tests for me that are more fierce than anything through which thus far I have had to pass. I am come on out of youth into mid-life.

The noontime of the struggle is a trying hour. Much of life's worst tragedy, I know too, has come in the afternoon. There is something about that cry of the psalmist for the defense from the pestilence that wasteth at noonday, that makes me feel that he had been in the hard task of the noon of life. I want to write my confidence right now at that very crucial hour. Not in the approach of the battle. That is hard. I have seen fine young fellows, as brave as any soldiers, lose control of themselves as they came up to the battle. It is a great test. My own son said to me, before he had felt the shock of actual battle, and when the anticipation of it was in his soul, "I don't want to lose my nerve going in." I can speak religiously now of life in the very midst of the conflict. He does deliver me. But I know there is yet to be the test of the evening time. I read with very great interest in our news column recently an account of a man who had been conducting some experiments in hypnotism over wild beasts. He had just cowed a powerful lion into unconsciousness, and turning to speak to the wondering spectators that great beast recovered himself and leaped fiercely upon the trainer and tore his arm into shreds. I am not haunted as I look into the future with the liability of a merely hypnotized past that will come again into the clamor of all its fierce threatenings. I go straight on to the evening time of my mortality in the assurance of the fact that all the dangers of my past life have not been

hypnotized but forgiven, and blotted out of His Book of remembrance.

Before me is death. He will deliver me. This is the forward confidence I would write across life. Write it to the very end.

> "Thus when the night of death shall come,
> My flesh shall rest beneath the ground,
> And wait Thy voice to rouse the tomb,
> With sweet salvation in the sound."

I write these words immediately upon my return from the grave where we left the mortal remains of one of the most heroic Christian young men I have ever known. Just as youth was catching strong step in noble purpose he was stricken with a most deadly disease. So far as has been known by medical science never but two cases have recovered. This young man declared he was going to be the third. He was in training as a physician. He immediately adopted every precaution in what he knew must be a long, long contest, if he should live. Day after day, for weeks, months and years, that indomitable young soul fought that fight with death. Every day he held scientific record of his life for one thousand and fifteen days. He has charted on an unbroken chart, the full record of his heart and his temperature, and in eleven volumes of carefully listed observations of life pursued by death he has left us his great story. Through it all, and down to the very last breath of it all he has sung, and then asked us to sing it when he was gone,

"Through every day,
O'er all the way,
God will take care of you."

I stand as a preacher of the Gospel of the Christian faith to gaze steadily ahead into tomorrow in the assurance of the promise we hold. He will deliver us.

Neither heights, nor depths, nor things present, nor things to come, nor life, nor death, nor any other creature, can invalidate this great salvation for me now or ever.

He saved me yesterday. That involves all that my crimson sin had come to mean. He washed me from the guilt, and saved me from the power and dominion of sin.

He saves me today. That involves all that temptation, and faltering, and stumbling can mean. It can be spoken in all the meaning of the infinite tenderness of the infinite Saviour, who shielded from blame the poor sinful woman who wanted a chance at a new life, as well as in the offered meaning of the infinite promise to help us all and each.

He will save me tomorrow. That involves all that can be run into the meaning of hell and heaven in the destiny of the human soul.

He is the God of our salvation, and it is not His desire that any soul should perish. Oh Thou Christ of every human need! The past assures us, the present confirms us, the future secures us. We give Thee our unfaltering allegiance. Memory, experience, and hope, confirm our salvation.

## What is a Religious Life?

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MY SUBJECT is the specific question, What constitutes a religious life? I say "specific," for the reason that I do not propose to deal in abstractions and generalities, to wander off into mystic heights of ecstasy and rapture. I want to be perfectly matter-of-fact in what I have to say, and thus specify, if I can, what it is in this daily, routine life of ours which differentiates a religious man from every other kind of a man.

More particularly do I want to mark, if possible, the distinction between a religious man and a moral man. We all of us know, or ought to know, what are the ethical standards of existence. After centuries of experience and thought, we have laid hold upon some fundamental principles that may be said to constitute morality. But what is the distinction between these principles and religion? Is there some ideal, or aspiration, or way of life added on to ethics to make religion, or is this supplementation an illusion, and ethics, after all, the whole philosophy of noble living?

There are plenty of people to argue that ethics and religion, in the true sense of the word, are practically

synonymous, and that anything "beyond good and evil," which we may choose to call religion, is only so much superstition, to be exposed and gotten rid of as soon as possible. But I propose to present the point of view that religion is something more than ethics—that religion is all that ethics is and then something in addition. In saying this, I do not seek to discredit ethics. The moral life, as such, is entitled to utter reverence, and may be all that can properly be exacted of men and women on this earthly plane. After all, if we can attain to some standard of morality in this world, we are doing pretty well; and for the present, at least, we may be wise to make this the next and farthest goal of our endeavor. But in my heart of hearts I cannot believe that morality constitutes, in any ultimate sense, this farthest goal. I must believe that there is something still beyond and above, and this the most precious thing in life. It is like the experience we have when we climb a mountain! Straight ahead, up the slippery sides of the craggy slopes, there looms the peak that we are seeking. We climb and climb, with much effort and heavy labor, only to find, when the peak is gained, that the summit of the mountain lies beyond. It is this "beyond" that constitutes religion. It is that elevation which is higher still than the elevation upon which we stand. It is "the top of the world"—a rarer atmosphere, a loftier outlook, and as the price of its attainment, a mightier labor and sacrifice, than anything that ethics can ever know. Now abide these two things—the

moral life and the religious life; and the greater of these is the religious!

I accept the viewpoint, in other words, of Jesus! You remember the immortal story of the rich young ruler. "What shall I do," said this young man to Jesus, "to inherit eternal life?" It is significant to notice that, in answer to this inquiry, Jesus turned immediately to the great commandments of the Law. "Thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not commit adultery; honor thy father and thy mother." The first stage in the journey toward "eternal life," obviously enough, is the stage of ethics. We must live the moral life before we can hope for anything else. We can have no true religion without ethics. But the ruler has done all of these things! "These things have I done," he said, referring to the commandments, "from my youth up." But did this satisfy Jesus? Not at all! Having obeyed all the commandments of the Law, and thus achieved the moral life, there was yet one thing more that this young man must do. And what was this "more," but that additional achievement which marks impressively the difference between religion and morality? The religious life, in other words, is something special. It has distinctive features of its own. And it is these features which, if possible, I want to isolate and describe.

In considering this subject, I can think of nothing better to do than to select certain notable men, whom we would all agree to call religious, and use these as

a basis of analysis. What qualities do such men share in common, which do not appear in the lives of ordinary men? Are there qualities of this kind? If we find such, have we not laid hold upon just those qualities which distinguish the religious life from every other kind of a life? Following this line of procedure, I choose for our examples of personal religion three men—one ancient, one medieval, one modern—whose names we will all agree represent transcendent qualities of spiritual character.

The first is *Jesus!* There can be no dispute as to the spiritual supremacy of this man. Controversy has raged, and still rages, over the theological question of his person—his relation to God, his incarnation of the holy spirit, his cosmic rank as judge of the quick and the dead. But when all these disputes have been swept away as having no reality, there emerges the figure of that noble Nazarene, human as we are human, a man as we are men, a figure of history like a thousand others, but moving on planes of thought and life so elevated, so exalted, that it is not surprising that men have thought of him as divine. Even his disciples felt his qualities in ways that made them speculate as to whether he was not the promised Messiah come at last. For these qualities were preeminently spiritual; they had to do with communion with things infinite and eternal, and the power that comes from such communion. Jesus was religious—he lived the religious life—and, in sheer wonder at

the beauty of such a life, men have for centuries acclaimed him as King and Lord.

The second man, whom I take as an example, is *Francis of Assisi.* It was over seven hundred years ago that this medieval saint lived and died. Seven hundred years is a long time to be remembered, yet the Assisan is as fresh a figure today as when he walked in love and joy upon the earth. In all of Christian history there is no man quite comparable to him; next only to the Nazarene himself, St. Francis stands supreme. Yet he was not a genius in any worldly sense. He left no writing to compare with Dante's "Divine Comedy," or Petrarch's sonnets; his preaching stirred no multitudes as did Savonarola's; even in organizing and administrative capacity he was far inferior to St. Dominic. But it was just because he excelled in no one of these qualities, perhaps, that he became so transcendent a figure for posterity. He lived in an age of war and cruel barbarism, in an age of dazzling wealth and its attendant corruption, in an age of lust, pride, and moral depravity. The church was as rotten as the state, the common man as vicious as the prince. In such a time, this "little brother" of Assisi walked in ways that lifted him up among his fellows, and endeared him to humanity through all future time, as one come from God himself. St. Francis, like the Master whom he so obediently followed, was a religious man. He lived the religious life. Of all men of our western world in the last two thousand years, I know of none who represents so per-

fect a pattern of what we mean by the religious life as Francis.

The last man, whom I take as an example, is a modern, one who is living among us at this moment—*Mahatma Gandhi*, of India. This man is not a Christian; I am glad of it, for his character demonstrates that Christianity has no monopoly in the things of the spirit. From his youth up Gandhi has been a Hindu. He is Eastern in all his thoughts and in all his ways of life. Yet we search the world in vain today for any man who so fully embodies what we regard as the Christian ideal, who follows so closely in the footsteps of Francis yesterday and of Jesus the day before, as this same Hindu. Says Bishop Fisher of Calcutta, for more than twenty years a Christian missionary in India, "You must take Mahatma Gandhi as perhaps the St. Francis of today. He is the nearest approach to the incarnation of the life of Jesus Christ that the world beholds." The divine inheritance, after all, knows no churches and no religions. It comes, like the air we breathe, out of the universal heavens, and into the universal heart. It is like the wind, to use Jesus's immortal parable. "It bloweth where it listeth, and no man knoweth whence it cometh or whither it goeth." Not to the Christian world at all, but to the pagan world, do we have to look today for the supreme and perfect example of the religious life.

It is these three men—Jesus, St. Francis, Mahatma Gandhi—that I would offer to you as illustrations of the religious principle incarnate in human life. What

qualities, now, do these men share together which are distinctive as contrasted with the qualities of other men? What have they done, as by agreement, which the ordinary man does not do? If we can answer these questions in the light of these transcendent examples, we shall have gone far, it seems to me, toward finding out just what it is that constitutes *per se* the religious life.

(1) The first fact common to these men, which attracts attention, is their poverty. Jesus's poverty, in origin at least, was accidental; he was born of a poor family, and remained in the ranks of artisans and peasants all his days. St. Francis's poverty was voluntary; his father was a wealthy cloth-merchant, who allowed his son to live in luxury and ease until there came that dramatic moment when the young man stripped himself naked, and went out a beggar upon the public highway. Gandhi's poverty is partly inherited, and partly voluntary; his father, a well-to-do merchant, gave away in charity the greater part of his possessions, a process which the son gladly completed when he dedicated his life to his fellow-men. This mere fact of poverty in itself, however, has little significance. What is important is the attitude which it betokens on the part of these men toward the whole problem of property and the soul.

Jesus made the issue perfectly clear when he said that there were two powers struggling for the allegiance of mankind—the one, God, and the other, Mammon. These are the two masters whom we can

serve, he said; one or the other, for we cannot serve both. Each requires nothing less than the whole and the best of a man. When we get hungry for money, we find ourselves doing things which debase character and outrage ideals. When we have accumulated properties, we feel it our first duty to protect these properties, and our easiest temptation to increase them. Where our treasure is, there our heart is also! So the inner life in us becomes darkened. We find ourselves cut off from our fellow-men, and set against them. More and more we choose money instead of men, and prefer property to human interest. So wealth grows stronger than a man, and finally owns him body and soul. How hardly, therefore, can a rich man enter into the Kingdom of Heaven! This is not because he is wicked, in any way natively worse than other men. But he has laid upon himself such burdens that it is harder for him to enter into the Kingdom than for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. So it was that Jesus advised the rich young ruler, when he wanted to inherit eternal life, that he sell his goods and give the money to the poor.

St. Francis went to even greater extremes than his Master. Upon himself and all his followers he laid the vow of poverty. No brother could own anything, but all must possess in common. Even the Order itself could hold no property, but all its churches and shrines be accepted simply as loans, for which due payment was to be made. This was not because Francis was an ascetic—on the contrary, he was full of the beauty and

joy of life! But he had known "the deceitfulness of riches" in his youth; and he wanted now that his life, and the lives of his followers, should be delivered from the burden of possession. He dreaded the temptation of owning anything. One day a novice came to him, and asked if he might not have a psalter of his own for his private devotions. The Saint refused him. "When you have your psalter," he said "you will want a breviary, and when you have a breviary, you will seat yourself in a pulpit like a great prelate, and you will beckon to your companion, and say, 'Bring me my breviary.'" Thus would his soul be lost! So Francis took Poverty to be his bride, and pledged the brethren of his Order to her service as "the lady of their chaste loves." When the bishop of Assisi protested against the extremities of his practice, the good Saint replied, "My Lord, if we possessed property, we should have need of arms for its defense, for it is the source of quarrels and law-suits; and the love of God and of one's neighbor usually finds many obstacles therein."

The same conviction holds the soul of Gandhi. Like Jesus and Francis, he has put by all the temptations of wealth, and would lead his people into those ways of simplicity and self-denial which can alone save them, he believes, from destruction. It is from this point of view that the Mahatma looks with such horror upon Western industry and Western culture, and strives to turn back the tide of influence from our world that is now beating upon the shores of his country. Let there be no question as to why Gandhi fears and hates the

West! It is because ours is a materialistic civilization; because we have builded a society which lays down the dictum that men may be sacrificed to money, and peace to property. Gandhi, like the Easterners generally, is predominantly interested in the things of the spirit; he seeks for himself and his people the religious life, and he sees our lust of possession a menace to his dreams.

It is perfectly clear, from these examples, that the religious life is inconsistent with the idea of property. It has to do with good and not with goods. Here it is sharply distinguished from the merely moral life. For a rich man can be moral; he can hold and spend his money, if he be conscientious, with every regard for the principles of right living. But can a rich man be religious? Not if Jesus and Francis and Gandhi are right. There seems to be something fundamentally inconsistent between what we have in terms of the temporal and what we are in terms of the spiritual. If we would live the religious life, we must divorce ourselves from that love of money which is "the root of all evil." How to do this is a question, the most terrible question of our day! The great men, to whom I am referring, sought economic freedom through the device of communal ownership. Jesus had his band of disciples with their common purse; Francis had his Order with its common treasury; Gandhi has his school and settlement, the Ashram. Whether it is possible, or wise, to undertake such a movement, in such a society as ours, is another question. The one thing we must seek, to my mind, is the socialization of our entire

system of industry and life. The true objective for the individual who would live the religious life, in our inherently materialized civilization, is the reconstruction of the social order in such ways that wealth shall be equitably distributed as well as abundantly produced, that the many shall have what they earn rather than the few what they seize, that riches and poverty shall be alike abolished in the equal enjoyment of the common good. We must seek, in other words, that great revolution of economic democracy, which is the true successor to the recent revolution of political democracy. Mankind must be made a brotherhood. Meanwhile, each one of us has his problem, as an individual, to attain deliverance from the personal passion of property. Only the man who does this is spiritually free—

> ". . . free from servile bands,
> Of hope to rise, and fear to fall;
> Lord of himself, though not of lands,
> And having nothing, yet hath all."

(2) I turn, now, to a second characteristic of the religious life. I refer to sympathy for the downtrodden and defenseless among our fellows, and an active, courageous, deliberately partisan advocacy of their cause.

If anything is more conspicuous in the Gospels than Jesus's severity upon the rich, it is his sympathy for the poor. And this sympathy was something *more* than sympathy. It was not charity, merely, but championship. It was a plea not for mercy but for justice.

He declared that these poor should be free. "Blessed are ye poor," he cried. "Blessed are ye that hunger now, for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh. Blessed are ye when men shall separate you from their company, and reproach you—for, behold, your reward is great." Next after the poor came the sick, not cared for in Jesus's day as in ours, but feared and cast aside when beset with contagion and insanity! He sought them out and comforted them and frequently, by his mere presence, healed them. Then he went to prisoners behind the bars, and prostitutes upon the streets—all the hated and despised of men—and lifted them up, and gave them a place within his Kingdom. What more significant than Jesus's declaration of his mission, when he stood up in the synagogue to preach! "I am come," he said, "to preach the gospel to the poor . . . to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives . . . to set at liberty them that are bruised."

St. Francis was the same kind of a man. Even as a dissolute young spendthrift, there was something in him that bound him to the wretched from whom others turned aside. Thus, there is the famous story of how he met a leper one day upon the road, and instinctively wheeled his horse away in disgust. Then suddenly, not knowing why, he leaped from his steed, bowed himself in the dust, kissed the leper, and wiped his wounds with his clothing. When he started his Order and gathered his brethren about him, these lepers were his

first concern. Then came the poor—hence the name of his followers, "The Little Brothers of the Poor"! Then came the criminals and outcast; one day when three notorious robbers had been driven away by Brother Angelo, Francis sent post-haste to bring them back, that they might be loved and served. Even animals in their troubles won his heart. Thus, he would deliver birds from their cages, and "take up the worms and slow moving insects from the road where they might be crushed under foot."

Gandhi has the same spirit, and has set himself to the same mission. Remember how he abandoned his profession, his family, his career, his social standing, everything that life had to offer, for the sake of the coolie laborers of South Africa, with whom he lived for twenty years, that he might share their suffering and battle for their deliverance! Note his devotion today to the piteous cause of the "untouchables"! Here in India are some fifty millions of unhappy men and women, who are banished from the society of their countrymen. The Hindu will not eat with the "untouchable," he will not speak with him, he will not receive him into his home, he will not even pass him upon the public highway, lest he be defiled. Think of the status of the southern Negro, then magnify it an hundred-fold, and you have a picture of the plight of the "untouchable" in modern India. To this most wretched of mortals has now come Gandhi as a champion and friend. The Mahatma is not merely kind to the "untouchable." He has espoused his cause.

He has demanded his liberation as an equal among equals. He receives him at his table, in his home, among his disciples, and asks that others receive him also. As Garrison freed the slave, so would Gandhi free the pariah. And all India is convulsed by this revolutionary demand of its greatest man for the emancipation of the most despised and degraded among its people.

Here, now, is the second requisite of the religious life. We must be the friends, the advocates, the champions of the oppressed. This does not mean, I repeat, mere charity. There is more, infinitely more, involved here than the giving of alms and sympathy to those less fortunate than ourselves. Charity as such belongs to the moral life, and in so far is good and beautiful. But beyond this is the exaction of the religious life—that we shall recognize these unfortunates to be our brothers, that we shall lift them up and place them in our world where they may be one with us in privilege and joy, that we shall demand justice and equality for the meanest of the race. These down-trodden and oppressed are with us still, be sure of that! The poor still crouch beneath a system which bends their backs and breaks their hearts; the worker still is exploited for the support of those who live in luxury and ease; the Negro still is branded with the badge of inferiority; children still labor; women still suffer; conscripted youth still walk in chains behind the chariot of war. Religion demands that we shall espouse the cause of these unhappy men; not that we

shall pity them merely, but that we shall deliver them, though the foundations of society be cracked by our endeavor. This is the task of the religious life. So Isaiah saw, when he told of the Messiah who should "judge the poor in righteousness, and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth." So Theodore Parker prayed from out his own great soul, when he said—

> "Give me the power to labor for mankind,
> Make me the mouth of such as cannot speak;
> Eyes let me be to groping men and blind,
> . . . and to the weak
> Let me be hands and feet."

(3) This mention of the religious life as reaching down into the darkest pit of human misery brings us immediately to the third characteristic of the religious life. I refer to the fact that those who would live the religious life must not only reach down to the lowest, but also out to the farthest, of mankind. Religion, in other words, must be universal and thus inclusive. It must recognize that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men," and thus over-leap all barriers in the quest of brotherhood.

All three of our chosen exemplars are universal men. There are indications that Jesus, in the beginning of his ministry, was thinking only of the Jews. He commanded his disciples not to go "into any way of the Gentiles, and (to) enter not into any city of the Samaritans, but to go rather to the lost sheep of the House of Israel." He refused to aid the Syro-

phoenician woman, because she was not a Jew, and her daughter a child of Jacob. But this provincialism dropped from him as a garment, as he pursued his cause; and in the climax of his work, he received all men into the embrace of his affection. Jew and Gentile, Israelite and Samaritan, Roman and Ethiopian, it was all the same to him. Not race, or nationality, or religion, not blood or tribe, not creed or color, mattered in the slightest. The spiritual test was alone important. When Peter, the Jew, faced Cornelius, the Roman, it was the spirit of Jesus upon his lips and in his heart, when he said, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him."

Francis also was a universal man. He was a citizen of Assisi when he began—as narrow as any of those medieval townsmen who liked nothing better than to buckle on their armor and draw sword, to do battle against their neighbors. But before he was done, this Assisan was a citizen of the world, with all the world for his parish. He went to Spain, he journeyed to Syria and Morocco, he sought out the Mohammedan and called him brother. Country, language, church—these meant naught to him. He loved men, as he loved birds and fishes and flowers, because they shared the life of God, and were all members one of another in his eternal Kingdom.

As for Gandhi, he is preëminently the universal man of our time. In his own life he is individualistic

—he has his own distinctive attachments and loyalties. Thus he is an Indian, devoted to the vindication and perpetuation of Indian culture. He is a Hindu, and among the Hindus a member of the strictest sect. In the seething political life of his country, he is a "No-Changer" as over against Swarajists, Liberals, and Home-Rulers. Against the English he has set his face like flint, to destroy their government by denial of coöperation. But loyalties and convictions of this kind do not shut his heart from men. Whatever the differences of opinion and policy, he can still be at one with all men in trust and love. Nothing in the end is so important, he says, as unity. Referring to the furious hatred between Mohammedan and Hindu, Gandhi says, "Is the God of the Mohammedan different from the God of the Hindu? Religions are different roads converging to the same point." Referring to the sectarian differences that rend his countrymen, he says, "The Hindus, the Mohammedans, the Parsees and the Christians, who have made India their country, are fellow-countrymen, and must live together in unity." Speaking of political discussions, he cries, "If I have equal love in me for No-Changers, Swarajists, Liberals, Home-Rulers, Independents, and for that matter, Englishmen, I know that it is well for me, and well also for the cause." So does he cherish this "equal love"—a love that leaps beyond the barriers of country and race, as beyond the barriers of church and party, and binds him to men wherever found.

In this do we have the third distinctive quality of the religious life. If we would be religious, in the truest sense of the word, we must know no creed or class, no race or country, but only the family of humankind. Not so is it with morality! The moral man can be parochial—tie himself up to some single group of men, and know nothing beyond this group. His world can be his country, and his only friends his countrymen. But the religious man can stop nowhere short of the circumference of the globe. Wherever men are, there are his brothers. Wherever a mouth speaks, a hand labors, a heart sorrows, there is his post of service. The religious man can feel no prejudice, cherish no fear, give way to no antagonism and hate. He can hide behind the walls of no single sect, wrap himself in the flag of no single country. If he sees a man, of whatever breed or color, he must simply love him, that is all; and thus in his love, which is his religion, fulfil the promise of that day when

> "Nation with nation, land with land,
> Unarmed shall live as comrades free,
> In every heart and brain shall throb
> The pulse of one fraternity."

(4) The mention of that word, "unarmed," brings us to another quality, or characteristic, of the religious life. Have you ever stopped to notice how persistently in all ages and in all countries, religion moves, as though by some pull of celestial gravitation, straight toward the ideal of non-resistance—the refusal to practice force and violence for the attainment

of ends, or, as Gandhi puts it, in terms positive rather than negative, the use of soul-force in place of physical force? Many there are who interpret this fact as evidence of the essential instability of the religious consciousness, of the tendency of the spirit to become fanatical and go to extremes. But I am inclined to believe, on the other hand, that we have here a revelation of the essential nature of religion, its inevitable application when it is wholly true to itself. There can be no doubt, at any rate, as to what our exemplars think about this matter.

Jesus is the outstanding non-resistant of all time. It is from him that we get the classic phrases descriptive of this ideal—"resist not evil," "turn the other cheek," "love your enemies," "he that taketh the sword shall perish by the sword." It is from him that we get immortal instances of conduct under this ideal—his refusal to take up arms for his Kingdom, his refusal to fight when arrested, his forgiveness of his enemies upon the cross. It is in his followers, also, the early Christians, that we find the greatest non-resistant movement in history. It is curious, when you come to think of it, that this ideal should have been so central in Jesus's thought. For it was the Maccabean tradition that flourished in his day, and the one desire of Jerusalem was for a Messiah to appears in arms against the Romans. But Jesus drew "the sword of the spirit," and used this as his only weapon.

St. Francis, in his ardor to imitate the Nazarene,

found nothing more necessary than non-resistance. So he sold his horse and armor, which he had worn so proudly as a soldier of Assisi, laid by his sword, and, putting on the robe of a beggar, went forth to win men not by power but by love. In all the literature of non-resistance, I know of no story more delightful —and also more impressive, as illustrating the positive aspects of the principle—than the story of Francis and the bishops. It reminds one of the story of Jesus, when he was asked to send down lightning upon the Samaritans because they would not receive him in hospitality. It seems that Francis's disciples came to him one day, and complained because certain bishops would not permit them to preach, but kept them idle and silent for days at a time. "Why don't we go to the pope," they said, "and get a privilege? Then these bishops would be forced to let us speak." But Francis answered, "I would first convert the prelates by humility and respect, for when they have seen us humble and respectful toward them, they themselves will beg us to preach and convert the people. I ask no privilege unless it be that I may have none—and to convert men more by our example than by our speech."

As for Gandhi, his non-resistant methods and practises are become the wonder of the world. Indeed, the Mahatma is unique among non-resistants in his use of "soul force," as he calls it, for the accomplishment of the greatest political and economic ends. In South Africa, for twenty years, he fought a battle against

tyranny with no other weapons than those of patient endurance of oppression and steadfast love of the enemy—and carried it through to victory. During the last eight years, he has been the leader of the Indian movement for national independence. He has been trying to do for his country, in other words, what Wallace did for Scotland, Garibaldi for Italy, George Washington for America. But unlike these other patriots, the Mahatma has drawn no sword and shed no blood. Like Francis, he would convert his foes and bring them to his side by "humility and respect."

Thus does non-resistance take its place among the religious virtues. More than any other one quality, it marks the distinction between the moral life and the religious life. I find no necessary place for non-resistance in a code of ethics. I can conceive of a man exemplifying the highest ideals of morality, and still resorting to violence for such legitimate ends as the defense of the weak and the oppressed. But religion takes us on to an altogether different plane, introduces us to an altogether different world. Here we get a new outlook, a new understanding of the forces of time and eternity. We become non-resistant in spite of ourselves, for we discover, to quote the words of Blake, that

> ". . . the tear is an intellectual thing,
> And a sigh is the sword of an Angel King,
> And the bitter groan of the martyr's woe
> Is an arrow from the Almighty's bow."

(5) The mention of non-resistance brings us in-

evitably to the next and last aspect of the religious life. What does the poet mean when he speaks of a "sigh" as "the sword of an Angel King," and a martyr's "groan" as "an arrow from the Almighty's bow"? Why, he means what Emerson meant when he spoke of hitching our wagon to a star. How, think you, does the non-resistant dare to put by the sword and the shield, and set his naked breast against the world? Because he believes in spiritual forces! Because he has faith in a power not ourselves that makes for righteousness! Because he trusts in God to bind men's hearts as he binds the stars. Behind the non-resistant ideal, in other words, there is that final vindication of religion which is the Spirit.

Jesus was in nothing so remarkable as in his immediate and exhaustive consciousness of the Divine. More truly of him than of Spinoza can it be said that he was "a God-intoxicated man." There was something naïve about his interpretation of God; few minds today can be satisfied with his theology. But Jesus was a man of his time, and he thought of God very much as others thought of him in that age. What was unique was Jesus's passion for God as a living and potent presence in the hearts of men.

St. Francis was the same—he had the same great consciousness of God. To him the divine spirit was so real that the whole universe was alive, and all things as kinsmen of his heart. Read his immortal "Canticle of the Sun," and see how he addressed the sun as his "brother," and the moon as his "sister,"

and sang praises to his "sister water," and his "brother fire," and his "mother the earth"! Francis was more naïve than Jesus, but his heart was in tune with the Infinite, and discovered, therefore, realities of Love and Beauty, powers of Truth and Right, that most of us know nothing about.

As for Gandhi, he is again the same! Every day—his hour of prayer with the Eternal! Every week—his twenty-four hours of silent meditation with the Divine! Every year—his stated period of withdrawal from the world, that he may find God and understand his purposes afresh. "Without prayer," says the Mahatma, "I could do nothing." But he faces an Empire, with no other weapons than patience and love within the heart, because he sees

> "God within the shadow, keeping
> watch above his own."

These men are mystics! To them this world is no machine, its essence no combination of mere matter and force. On the contrary, this world is to them a living organism, a spirit at work with destiny, a power that moves the stars and moves not less the hearts of men. In this consciousness of spiritual reality is the crown of the religious life. We must all be mystics if we would be religious. The moral man may be content, like the Stoic, to be himself the master of his fate, the captain of his soul. But the religious man reaches out for the Divine, and finds him at his side.

H. G. Wells has summed it all up, with matchless eloquence, in his *God the Invisible King*:

> "Religion is the first thing and the last thing, and until a man has found God . . . , he begins at no beginning, he works to no end.
>
> "Life falls into place, only with God, who fights through men against Blind Force and Might and Non-Existence;
>
> "Who fights with men against the confusion and evil within us and without, and against death in any form;
>
> "Who loves us as a great Captain loves his men, and stands ready to use us in his immortal adventure against waste, disorder, cruelty and vice;
>
> "Who is the end, who is the meaning, who is the only King."

Such are the elements of the religious life. Who of us all fulfils this life? Alas, not one! It is too high, too far. Just for that reason, however, is it the *religious* life. For religion is a goal, a star, a vision that shines forever. Religion is the "beyond."

# Twin Perils

*By* Daniel A. Poling, D.D., marble collegiate reformed church, new york

*"Pride goeth before destruction."*
—PROVERBS XVI – 18

*"The fear of man bringeth a snare."*
—PROVERBS XXIX – 25

TWO great perils, ever present though at times particularly apparent, are pride and fear. They underlie the spirit of militarism. They are responsible for secret diplomacy. They are the leading clue to the mystery of any nation's reluctance to enter into a world court or an association of free powers; they undergird industrial unrest and in our individual lives they stand as a barrier between us and our waiting God. There can be no cure for the present international situation, there can be no remedy for sin, without reckoning with these.

The armistice in the Great War was signed in the forest of Compiègne, near a village called Rethondes. The document was completed in a railway carriage which is now exhibited in Paris near the tomb of Napoleon. At the spot where the actual signing took place a monument has been erected bearing the inscription "Here succumbed the criminal pride of the German Empire." Though that inscription was written

by the French, their haunting fear today is that the inscription is not true. It is this fear that makes peasants restless and statesmen sleepless. At that monument bearing the inscription "Here succumbed the criminal pride of the German Empire," pride and fear meet and make common cause. The pride of Germany humiliated and embittered, seeking revenge, walks arm and arm with the fear of France for her future. Pride and fear, these are the major forces working, and thus far working successfully, to complicate and defeat all efforts toward the reassuring of the world.

What keeps the United States from practically all vital associations in world affairs? Fear, fear of what we choose to call "entangling alliances," though our freedom from these so-called entangling alliances did not keep us out of one war and could not deliver us from another. If nothing else could force us in, pride would. If the next war ever comes, and God forbid, Pride and Fear will be again its high commanders.

Pride is both a virtue and a vice, and the same may be said of fear. There is an honest pride: the pride that the carpenter takes in a piece of work perfectly done; the pride of a mother in the virtuous accomplishment of her child; the pride of a patriot in the justice and democracy of his country. But there is never a time when pride does not walk perilously close to some pit of disaster and always it goeth before destruction. I have small patience with those who affect to despise ancestry. If your blood runs down from some revolutionary fountain, I congratulate you;

but, Sir, do not dam the stream—give it an open channel through. I shall never forget the youth of Cambridge, Mass., who just before the War, declared that even though he did not enlist—and this was in advance of selective conscription—his silence could not be misunderstood because his ancestors came over in the Mayflower! "Pride breakfasted with plenty, dined with poverty and supped with infamy," said Benjamin Franklin. In the instance referred to, it began with the Mayflower and ended with a callow cad.

It is always difficult for pride to appreciate the rights and distinctions, the holy things of others. Pride is easily inconsiderate and unjust and talks glibly the language of the survival of the fittest. Its gospel becomes presently "the might of right." What is a Louvain University or a Cathedral of Rheims when pride sends forth its conquering armies?

Pride has equipped the mightiest fleets and marshalled the greatest battalions, erected the most beautiful capitals and organized the richest empires, but always its fleets have come upon a Sir Francis Drake; its armies, upon a Wellington; its capitals, upon a Genghis Khan, and its empires, to dissolution. "Pride is a whizzing rocket that would emulate a star," wrote Wordsworth and its kingdoms have passed as the flight of a meteor.

Invariably with nations, as with individuals, pride begets a false confidence, while it lights fires of insolence that may be seen and appraised from afar. The

great military powers have always accomplished their own downfall by overestimating themselves and by undervaluing their foes. At last we hear the haughtiest wailing with Woolsey,

"I have ventured like little wanton boys that swim on bladders,
This many summers in a sea of glory,
But far beyond my depth, my high blown pride,
At length breaks under me."

Do you have pride in your good health? I remember *him* standing in the sun lifting up his great chest, contracting his waist, and beating with his fists upon his mighty heart and lungs. He has been dead for a decade and he died at Saranac Lake. Pride it was that led him to run risks with his health.

Do you have pride in your business? In the great success that has always accompanied your ventures? If you do, then watch the more closely your investments and remember that millions may be lost in less than a minute.

Do you have pride in your power? In the adulation of those who bow about you? At the best, power is of few lasting qualities, and fame, until men are dead for at least a generation, is as shallow as a breath. I am a young man, but I have seen eight presidents rise into the sun of our electoral glory and then quickly disappear. And governors! Creatures of a political day.

Do you have pride in your possessions? Your home, your children, your work? I would not wrest the joy from life. I could not; but if I could, I would not.

God pity us when we do not have pride, but God pity us the more when we do not distinguish the pride that goeth before destruction. Some of us may even be proud of our humility, proud of our lack of pride. The sin of pride is not in possessions but in the quality of the mind, in the nature of its spirit. Pride, the most brilliant and at the same time the most futile: pride, great in anticipation and little or less in fulfillment: pride, leading us to glory, but going before destruction.

> "Oh, why should the spirit of mortal be proud?
> Like a swift flying meteor, a fast flying cloud,
> A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,
> Man passes from life to his rest in the grave."

But with this fact of pride we must deal in our own lives, in all our social and political relationships; in our most sacred religious experiences, and dealing with it, we should know it as one of the twin perils of each generation.

I have said that fear is both a virtue and a vice, and I might with truth say again all that I have said—say of fear, what I have already declared of pride. Fear undermines physical as well as moral strength: fear leads a man to defeat in business; fear causes great monarchs to abdicate and winning captains to withdraw; and fear is the most insidious poison that ever enters the moral veins of youth. Every language is particularly rich in epigrams and proverbs featuring fear. The Arab writes it down thus, "The leaf cracked and your servant fled"; also "Among ten men, nine are

women." But who of us has not found himself at some time or another in his life whistling to keep himself from being afraid? I had passed through many experiences and had lived to be thirty-three before I ever admitted that I was a coward. But when my hour came, I faced the stern and ghastly fact, and from it there was no turning aside. I might deceive my enemy, I might deceive my friend, but I could not deceive myself. I was afraid.

There is a fear that makes for supercourage and "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Such fear it is that Burke had in mind when he said, "Fear is the mother of safety." We need a world filled with men and women who fear to do evil; who are afraid lest in seeking their own good, they find another's hurt. But this is another sermon. Fear with pride is a twin peril of our time and such fear we face today.

"There is a virtuous fear," declares Pascal, "which is the effect of faith, and there is a vicious fear which is the product of doubt; the former leads to hope as relying on God in whom we believe; the latter inclines to despair, as not relying on God in whom we do not believe. Persons of the one character fear to lose God; persons of the other character fear to find Him." Where do we find ourselves? In what class are we located?

Does it not seem that our generation is troubled with international hysteria? Certainly there has been enough to make the nations nervous. Remember that pistol shot at Sarajevo! Explosions that wreck cathe-

drals and baptize funeral parties with the blood of innocent victims, revolutions that seethe among four hundred million yellow people, do not soothe our already overtaxed nerves. And international politics but reflect our individual lives and our personal relationships. We are living today in an atmosphere of terror. Returning to our apartment, I saw that drilling operations at the foundation of the building to be erected immediately at the north were practically completed and that the contractor was ready for dynamite. Instinctively I questioned, "What is the chance of that disturbing our building?" We no longer take anything for granted. We live, not in trust, but in terror. And remember: those who so live so die! The individual who is afraid to eat lest he be poisoned starves, or what he does swallow disagrees with him. The business man who continues to distrust his associates inevitably governs his transactions with them accordingly and is distrusted by them. The man who looks into every dark corner for an enemy and never finds one is vastly worse off than the happy-go-lucky individual who stumbles at last into an ambush. The latter was at least happy until his trouble came, though I admonish you against emulating and following either of the two. But such fear is a pestilence and a delusion.

Meetings of Communists are to me always sad spectacles. The American form of government is easily the most generous and successful, yet evolved and put into effect by the mind of man. Its only real failures

are failures due to the indifference and neglect of its citizens. Its wrongs are all redressable without appeal to force or revolution. Its genius is progressive and allows for adjustment and change to meet the needs of the ever advancing social order. Class rule, for which Communists call, is equally futile and evil, whether it is the rule of the Communist, or of a feudal group. Its government will inevitably fall of its own weight.

But sad as these Communist meetings are, an infinitely sadder spectacle would be the denial of the free speech guarantees of the American Constitution. The Communist at last defeats his own vicious purpose. Gag Freedom and she will go mad. Give her a voice and above every sophistry of violence and selfishness, however loudly their spokesmen cry, she will declare the truth. The Constitution of the United States is a document of faith, not of fear.

Fear prompts nations to begin again the mad and futile race in navy building and military enlargement. Futile, I say, and mad, for it leads, if continued in, to destruction for us all. We are bound by fallacies and we are blind to the tragedies of history as well as deaf to the clear teachings of Christ if we do not actively support every honest effort to bring the nations into agreement. "They that take the sword shall perish by the sword" is not the word of a man: it is the judgment of God.

Consider the origin of fear. It is born either in ignorance or sin. Ignorance and sin! The world's ugli-

est twins! Time's most vicious brothers. Beyond the dim Azores lay mystery, the cloud-hung, storm-compassed unknown, and men were afraid. Fear it was that lighted the fires of hell against the unbroken horizon of the West. Fear it was that filled the waters with monsters. Fear—yes, and pride too—the pride that was ashamed to acknowledge cowardice; the pride that sent the Phœnician home with a terrifying explanation for the failure of his quest. We do not despise these early mariners; we only the more acknowledge the intrepid Norseman and the indomitable Genoan who swept through these last barriers to find the end of the world. Fear is the final foe of man and it raises the walls of its defense with the granite of ignorance in the mortar of sin. "Ye shall know, know the truth and be free" is the oracle of God: free from the terrors of vast spaces, free from the chains of mysteries, free from the bondage of superstitions. "And ye shall know me, know my redemption, my forgiveness, my purification and be free from that superbondage, the bondage of sin"; this is the voice of Jesus, the Christ—our Saviour. Here is the sublime opportunity of the Christian Church. Pride goeth before destruction, but perfect love casteth out fear. Jesus conquered the world when He humbled Himself and when girded, not with a buckler but with a towel, washed His disciples' feet. Love conquers both pride and fear and love is the ruling principle, the master passion, of the Christian faith.

Let us face the stern, unpleasant, the ugly fact.

We of the Church have failed, have failed Jesus Christ, failed our fellows, failed our world. He counts on us; He has no other plan; He wins with us or He loses: But we have not seen, we have not preached, we have not practiced as we should, the absolute necessity for love in all the aspects and places of life: We have repeated but we have not lived His last and great commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thyself." We have seemed in our living to say, "The words and principles of Christ will do for repeating, will do for idealizing, but in practical life we must recognize the grim realities of fear and pride." Yea, and recognize them without trying to correct them. This has been our philosophy. I say that it is a philosophy of sophistry, a philosophy of Bael and we call ourselves Christians! What has it done for us? *What has it done for us?* It has given us a world of red-running frontiers and military laboratories working overtime to produce the deadliest gases. It has given us classes poisoning the springs of social life against each other. It has given us family anarchy, disrespect for law, disregard for the rights and the possessions of others and a certain lewdness of mind that has hung a curtain before the holy fires that should burn ceaselessly upon our altars.

We must halt; we must right-about-face; we must march with Jesus: this sophistry must be denied: this false God of so-called "Practicability" must be thrown down. Christianity is not a profession; it is a confes-

sion. For better and for worse, in adversity as in prosperity, for individuals and for nations, it knows and presents a force which can cast out both pride and fear, a force which replaces each with a higher pride and a deeper fear—the fear of unworthiness rather than of personal injury; the pride of serving rather than of being served; the fear of God and dread of sin; the pride of human brotherhood and of sonship through Jesus Christ.

## "I Am a Hebrew"

*By* Rabbi Leon Harrison, temple israel, st. louis

JONAH 1–9

THE ringing cry of Jonah is my text and theme. "I am a Hebrew." I am a living link in the infinite chain that stretches from the Rock of Sinai to the Rock of Plymouth. I spring from Israel, the mother of Prophets, from Israel, the despised and rejected of men, yet the more unswervingly the Gladiator of God. This high calling of the Jew is stamped upon his very body; it speaks in the bent of his mind, and in an exaltation and divine fire that kept this harried witness of the Eternal alive through hostile ages, proudly proclaiming in the midst of what is called a Christian civilization, "I am a Hebrew."

But the world will curiously ask, what do these words mean in the mouth of a modern Jew? Do they avow a religious or a race affiliation? Do they indicate a free choice, or a passive reaction to heredity, training and outward pressure, as William James brilliantly maintained in his famous essay, "The Will to Believe"? Is the Jew passively swayed by this Will to Believe? Or does he freely choose among all live alternatives the faith of his fathers?

And my answer is, that the Jew, in his loyalty to

his ancient traditions, responds, like all other men, to both of these powerful influences. In his mind there is a passive will to believe, woven out of many strands; and an active will to believe, equally cogent and compelling. We will follow the logical order of influences, in considering first the passive Will to Believe, as it operates to attach the Jew of today to the religion of his fathers.

I

Now among these passive forces ancestry takes the foremost place. Every man remains, for the most part, what he is born. He inherits generally his social class, his fatherland, and various preconceived ideas, religious, political, and otherwise. Religion is rarely a choice deliberately made as at an intellectual emporium. It is an inheritance. This is as true of the average Catholic and Protestant as it is of the Jew; it is equally true of the various sects of Protestantism. Men are born into them; and many subtle associations both endear and sanctify these early religious impressions. The phrase, "the God of our Fathers," so common in the Hebrew Bible and Ritual, shall equally belong in the world's newest Scriptures and in every conceivable liturgy. And this is doubly true in a faith, which like Judaism is peculiarly a family religion,—a faith which even without the Synagogue could be perpetuated at the domestic altar. This is especially true further of Judaism, because of the unusual filial reverence, still common in Jewish homes, that greatly

honors and loves not only the father, but the father's faith. We strongly feel, even when we do not clearly analyze, the force of ancestry that is foremost among the constituent elements of the passive Will to Believe.

The other elements in this attitude are associated with the first, and partly flow therefrom. I mention next the Jewish consciousness, the historic consciousness of the Jew, only a sentiment perhaps, yet how powerful a sentiment! It is the consciousness in a member of the race of its almost inconceivable antiquity, of its romantic and picturesque annals upon its own soil, its rise to power, its points of contact with imperial world-currents, and then its tragic downfall. And the historic imagination recalls how this catastrophe, the grave of any ordinary people, became for this strange race the cradle of a new spiritual life; how they went forth as homeless exiles over the world's highways and byways, outlasting the Egypt that conquered them, the Rome that destroyed them; and though the weakest of homeless peoples, mastering and transforming even their persecutors with their spiritual influence. The historic consciousness beholds them, not worn out, but wearing out civilizations and dominions, ancient and mediæval. And this longevity has not been like the gift to Tithonus of immortal life without immortal youth, who thus was cursed with eternal senility. The everlasting Jew has continued to generate master-minds and prophet-souls. Poets, philosophers and leaders of the highest class have

sprung from Israel's loins in every century, mediæval and modern. And today the ancient Synagogue stands firm, with its old thought that is yet so new, clustered about with immemorial traditions of a great and wonderful past that we cannot feel has in any serious measure exhausted the possibilities of Israel. This vista spans two worlds and countless generations. The history of our people is written in every tongue, and has enriched the spiritual and intellectual treasures of every people. The rude inscriptions in the Jewish catacombs outside the gates of Rome recall their fidelity under the pagan emperors; the old-new Synagogue in Prague, standing for a thousand years, is still dim with tragic memories and dank with the blood of countless Jewish martyrs. And after all these horrors and tears, we behold near the ruined gateway of the ancient Roman ghetto, wherein night by night the Popes of Rome locked up their Jewish serfs until temporal power passed from them in 1868—close at hand we see the new marble Synagogue wherein might worship not so long ago a Jewish Mayor of the Eternal City, and a Jewish Prime Minister of United Italy.

This tremendous panorama, with its dramatic contrasts, with its infinite variety, with its strange vicissitudes, appeals powerfully to the historic sense; and intensifies the Jewish consciousness of him who reads the storied pages of Israel's Past.

And this instinctive allegiance is given not only

strength, but a certain sanctity by community of suffering. We value highest that for which we have paid the greatest price; there is no bond like the brother's bond of a common sorrow. And when men have endured physical penalties followed by age-long disabilities, and even in enlightened lands the petty martyrdom of social stigma, they are naturally not only consolidated into a closer unity, but into a deeper loyalty to that for which they have endured so much. There are men of Jewish blood that possess perhaps but little faith in Israel's spiritual heirlooms, and yet they are faithful to their people's cause, responsive to the cry of the needy and oppressed, because they are stung by the world's inhumanity and injustice; and therefore whether with or without religious enthusiasm, stand loyally by the people with whom they have a common heritage.

They are instinctively drawn likewise toward a religious system which, having sprung from the genius of their race, is adapted to the genius of their race. This idea is potent in influencing the Will to Believe. For the Will to Believe is not mental as much as it is temperamental; and a religion thus that mirrors the idiosyncrasies of a people that are practically unchanged by the passing ages, naturally interests and influences that people. Why then should a man of such an historic stock go further afield to choose a faith that is not his, that does not outmerit his own? He surely does not cold-bloodedly weigh pro's and

con's in his religious choice. For religion is not brain-born but heart-woven. It springs from the totality of the race-consciousness, of the historic consciousness; it appeals to that from which it arises, and affects thus potently, though passively, our Will to Believe.

II

But religion would be but a poor weak thing were it only the passive acceptance of our fathers' faith; were it only an historic charge; our resentment against undeserved pain; just an adaptation of an historic growth to the temperament of a people. It surely means much more than that to all whose convictions are worth-while. For however much religion, that deals with the Infinite, eludes our active reason simply because it transcends it, it does not elude our active Will. Indeed the primary appeal of a religion acceptable to the modern mind is to the Will—the Will that acts, that seeks to approach or to attain the practical ideals of an ethical religion; and the Will also that consciously and deliberately accepts those ideals and the philosophy of the Universe upon which they rest. The energy of our religious convictions corresponds to the energy of character with which we espouse the teachings of religion; as well as the energy with which we execute those teachings when they relate, as they should—indeed as they do in Judaism—to realizable ideals. We will therefore endeavor to enumerate the prime factors that influence our active Will to Believe.

The first of them flows from all the preceding ones. Ancestry, the historic consciousness, community of suffering, the feeling of temperamental unity with the race and faith, awaken an active sense of loyalty. Loyalty is the passionate devotion of all fine natures to a cause that rightly claims their allegiance, whether that cause be patriotic, political, religious, or one concerning the duties of personal friendship. And a taproot of elemental loyalties should be surely community of birth, a common past, noble traditions; indeed the very unpopularity of the cause espoused, its need of succor and staunch support; its need of generous and self-forgetting chivalry. The noble nature feels that the harder is the task, the holier is the call. The fewer are the champions of a forlorn hope, the more fervid must they be, and the finer their devotion.

Without loyalty, no really splendid character is conceivable, and no continuous moral progress is possible. Without it there can be no community of effort; no successive inspirations that bind the ages together, and slope the history of the world upward. Loyalty to a hard task, to a cause that will be rated as its champions are rated, with no worldly encouragement from the experience of the Past, with no immediate prospect of a dramatic change for the better in the fortune and prestige of that cause—loyalty under such circumstances, is alike the duty and the finest badge of the true gentleman. It is his sacred honor, the

credentials of his Knighthood. Loyalty, freely chosen and steadfast against all odds, is the first fine fruitage of the active Will to Believe.

But loyalty, too, may seem in a sense instinctive. It may seem to some a devotion into which we rather drift than direct ourselves. But surely not, when even as a *post-factum* influence our faith is confirmed by reason, though not actually created thereby; when we realize that it is in harmony with the science of our age and with the philosophy of all ages; when we who are Jews, with critical minds, estimate none the less because of this, the faith of a skeptical race, tested and sifted by the operation of that law of the human mind, operating in the direction of a minimum of belief, that Sir William Hamilton called the "Law of Parsimony." Our instructed intelligence will not pick flaws in a religion that is not only partially but structurally ethical; and whose ethics are essentially social and not individualistic, as indeed the latest thinking of our own generation demands; and whose whole religious system is pragmatic in the sense that it is not held authentic or worthy of acceptance save in its direct relationship and inspiration to action.

That religion surely has powerful claims alike on our mind and on our Will whose tenets the world at large is not forsaking but approaching; whose standpoint is that with which the Liberal Church is more and more completely identified; whose idea of univer-

sal Unity in one form or another runs through all the scientific and philosophic thinking of our day. Reason must surely influence our active Will to Believe in that which is so essentially reasonable.

III

We have spoken of the passive Will to Believe and of the active Will to Believe. Does it not occur to you that the Will to Believe is largely a result of the *need* to believe? And as there is a need in our human nature and life to believe some things, so there is equally a need and a corresponding will in our mental constitution *not* to believe other things. In a word, a religion is distinguished as much by its negations as by its affirmations. And Judaism especially has been a religion of protest, a protest against certain current theological assumptions that run counter to the bent and genius of Israel, and to what the historic sense of Israel believes to be the truth, the highest truth absolutely, and also in its practical relation to human welfare. It is of considerable interest therefore, to consider not only Israel's will to believe, but his will not to believe. And invariably in such discussions as this therefore, in connection with the question Why I am a Jew, the further question is asked, why are you not a Christian?

But this question is essentially polemical. And further it is a very extensive one. Today we can give it only a passing answer.

Are we asked to accept a superior ethical system in the New Testament as compared with the Old, when without regard to the correctness of this comparison, the fact is generally ignored that several crowded centuries separate the end of the Hebrew Scriptures from the beginning of the Christian Gospels, and during that period, Jewish ethics and the Hebrew spiritual outlook also grew, as evidenced in the unfamiliar pages of the Midrash and the Talmud?

Are we recommended to change our religious dogmas and thus to score an advance? Is the Trinity then a higher conception than that of the Divine Unity, attested by the uniformities of science, and the oneness of the Moral Law? Is the Incarnation an advance upon the stern Hebraic insistence upon the absolute spirituality of the Godhead? Does the idea of the Fall of Man surpass the Jewish doctrine of man's moral worth and freedom as made in the image of his Creator, and dowered by Him with both a knowledge of His will and the power to execute it?

Are we asked to abandon so-called tribalism for the broader and more real brotherhood of Christianity? We sometimes wonder whether it is the brotherhood of religious wars and bloody persecutions for religion's sake that even today have not perished from the earth. Is it the brotherliness of the Spanish Inquisition?

And if one sought to become a Christian, how should he choose between warring churches that fill the air with mutual denunciations; between rival forms of

baptism; between antagonistic creeds; between ecclesiastical authorities in eternal strife?

Can you tell me how my religious lot would be thus bettered; wherein my ethical ideals would be exalted or my spiritual conceptions purified, or my doctrines made loftier and more rational? Has the attitude of the Christian Church to the Synagogue, or that of the Christian in all ages to the Jew, taught by example the higher Brotherhood of Man?

Until therefore I deem that a better religion is offered to my acceptance, I will to believe my own. In this direction flow my passive inclinations, and my active choice; to this incline me equally the negations and the affirmations of the Faith of my Fathers.

I will to believe and I must believe in the Unity of God; in His progressive revelation throughout the ages; in His direct relation to man without intermediaries; in salvation not by creed but by deed.

I will to believe and I must believe as a Jew, in the historic mission of my people, a prophet-people and a priest-people, that has begotten great world-religions as well as its own peculiar Faith. I believe that Israel is to be not a privileged people, but a pattern-people; that its sufferings are to be a discipline; that it is not to cease prophesying or teaching until there shall arise the Kingdom of God upon earth.

Thus alike the passive Will to Believe and the active Will to Believe, and also the Will not to believe have kept us firm in the faith of our fathers; partly because we must be what we are; and partly because

we can justify the faith that is in us, and because among alternatives that we will not and cannot believe, this is the only live possibility for our soul's choice.

And that is why I am a Jew, and please God will remain one; until with the last movement of lips stiffening in death shall leap forth the ancient cry, "Hear O Israel, the Eternal is our God, the Eternal is One."

## The Curse of Cynicism

*By* Harry Emerson Fosdick, D.D., park avenue baptist church, new york

*"Nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful"*
—PSALMS 1–1

CHRIST'S way of life is having a difficult time in this world. What is the trouble? I propose the thesis that not so much intellectual scepticism as moral cynicism is the chief enemy of Christianity. The great difficulty is not so much that people theoretically disbelieve the propositions on which Christian living is based but that they live in another moral world altogether and find Christian living practically unreal.

Some time ago, so I am told, an artist and a timber merchant stood together watching a glorious sunset throw its lingering light over a forest gorgeous with autumnal colors. After a long silence, the artist said, "It is glorious, isn't it?" to which the merchant replied, "Yes, that is great timber; I reckon that allowing for felling and transportation it ought to work out to about eighty cents a foot." That merchant did not theoretically disbelieve the propositions on which the artist's judgment rested; he simply lived in another world altogether.

Such is the chief obstacle that confronts Christ's

way of life. There is, to be sure, plenty of downright intellectual scepticism, but for the most part people do not stop to argue against Christianity; they merely live in their own world, which is altogether different from Christianity, so that when Christian ideals of life are obtruded on them they sit, as the first Psalm puts it, "in the seat of the scornful."

That this attitude negatives all that Christ stood for is obvious. He never sat in the seat of the scornful. He believed in persons, even bad persons, whom others gave up. He believed in the possibility of a righteous society here on earth, where God's will would be done. He believed in the power of moral forces to achieve this victory and, turning His back on cynical chicanery and violence, trusted Himself to goodwill and love to the point of utter sacrifice. And so believing in persons and in their spiritual resources, He enthroned personality at the heart of the universe and called God His Father.

To be sure, Jesus knew all the devilishness of men. He drank to the dregs the cup of their contumely and brutality. There is nothing we could tell Him that He would not understand about the stupidity and cruelty of our race. But, for all that, His faith in people, in social possibilities, in the efficacy of moral forces, and in the good God never wavered. Obviously, therefore, there is nothing that more completely contradicts and obliterates what Christ stood for than cynically to sit in the seat of the scornful.

Our failure to recognize moral cynicism as our chief

enemy is responsible for the fact that much of our preaching goes wide of the mark. We often preach as though we had on our hands some Robert Ingersoll with his lusty agnosticism; whereas what we really have on our hands is H. L. Mencken splitting his sides laughing at us. We frequently talk as though we were trying to save religion from Tom Paine, whereas Tom Paine is long dead and what Christianity faces is Lothrop Stoddard and his cynical gospel that we are the people, and his contempt for lesser breeds. We continually talk as though we had to construct theoretical arguments for religion, whereas what the people are reading is Sinclair Lewis having a riotous time burlesquing religion and putting an inconceivably vile rotter into the Christian pulpit. We attack scepticism when our most popular and powerful enemy is cynicism and, as another has said, cynicism is the devil.

Let us not shrink from making this fact real in concrete terms. American family life is in a bad way and any one who watches the rising proportion of divorces and notes the consequences to our artificially orphaned children may well be anxious about the future. But if anybody thinks that the trouble is theorists conducting an argumentative campaign against monogamy, he is off the track. Theorists are not our chief trouble. Our trouble is a flood tide of moral cynicism. Read our newspapers; go to the theaters and movies; pick up our magazines and novels. You would suspect that most husbands are unclean, most wives unhappy, and all marriages more or less rotten.

With a singular unanimity of cynical disparagement the most popular agencies of propaganda that we have are doing to American family life exactly what Vivien's tongue did to the Round Table in Tennyson's *Idylls of the King;* it raged

> ". . . Like a fire among the noblest names,
> Polluting, and imputing her whole self,
> Defaming and defacing, till she left
> Not even Lancelot brave, nor Galahad clean."

In a kindred realm it is quite obvious that standards of sex relationship which only a few years ago seemed secure, at least as ideals of life, are blatantly discredited. What is the trouble? Has a group of theorists succeeded in proving that sexual promiscuity is advantageous to the race, that free love is to be the salvation of society? Of course not. Our enemy is of another caliber. Bernarr MacFadden and his ilk, with their pernicious magazines and tabloids, are not philosophers; they are cynics. They have found the road to money through the passions of the people. There has often been in history a type of person upon whom the just condemnation of right-minded people has been visited: the panderers namely, who rose to place and power by ministering to the lowest vices of their masters, Roman emperors or French monarchs. Today that same type of character emerges, winning money by ministering to the lowest vices, not of the monarch but of the mob, not of the aristocracy but of the democracy.

In another realm, any one who cares about the wel-

fare of the race must be concerned about our international turmoil. Our dove of peace, like her ancient ancestress from Noah's ark, would have difficulty in discovering a single solid place to land amid our flood of bitterness and hate. What is the trouble? Is it that the people are theoretically for war as against peace? Not in the least. The Bernhardis are few in number. The trouble is a deep-seated and widespread moral cynicism about international relationships. Listen to this from a popular magazine with a circulation of a million and a quarter:

"The time for discussing the right and wrong of the foreign attitude toward America is past. Only the fact that we are universally hated, counts. With all our neighbors looking for a chance to break into our melon patch, carry off the fruit, and trample on the vines, it is time to train a couple of bulldogs and load the shotgun, and not to talk of brotherly love toward those who hate and despitefully use us."

That is essential cynicism and its quality is infernal.

Multitudes of people live habitually in this realm of which we have been speaking. They eat, drink, and breathe cynicism. They are enfolded by it as by an atmosphere. When, then, they venture into or are dragged into a Christian church and hear, let us say, the beatitudes read, "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled," it is not so much that they theoretically disbelieve the propositions on which such thinking rests as that they cannot understand it. They are like pygmies

from the center of Africa listening to Keats' "Ode on a Grecian Urn."

Probably a good deal of this prevalent cynicism is a post-war reaction and we need not be too discouraged about it. Niagara Falls is a great affair but those who, like myself, spent their boyhood within easy reach of it know that there is something there more tremendous than the Falls itself; namely, the Whirlpool Rapids below the Falls. It takes many a mile of tempestuous turmoil after the Falls to get to the peace of Lake Ontario. Well, the Great War was Niagara Falls and we still are in the rapids. Let us take account of that fact and see what the consequent cynicism is doing to us. There is none of us who, if he searches his conscience, will not find cynicism one of the most powerful and seductive enemies of his Christian life.

In the first place, there is a conflict between cynicism, on the one side, and faith in people and their possibilities, on the other.

Cynicism about people is easy to excuse. When Carlyle said that England's population was mostly fools he expressed a mood we all know. David said in his haste that all men were liars but we are tempted to say the same thing upon mature deliberation. Merely to be Pollyannas about this race is incredible; there are too many morons, too many crooks. Indeed, Jesus himself said some terrific things about people: "Beware of men"; "Ye serpents, ye offspring of vipers, how shall ye escape the judgment of hell?" "Woe

unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! . . . It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, than for you." And once, in a dreadful passage, he said that in dealing with men one could lay pearls before swine and give that which is holy unto dogs. Nevertheless, when you have said your worst about people, there is something the matter with cynicism. What is it?

No man can practice cynicism on everybody else long before it begins to turn in upon himself. Cynicism is a disease which, if a man play with it outwardly, he is bound to catch inwardly. The cynic becomes cynical about himself and then he finds out what cynicism is. It is a fatal blight. It kills joy; it saps sanity; it stops life. A man who has become a cynic about himself is done.

If any of us amounts to anything it is because there were people who had faith in us. When we were babes, with all our possibilities of good and evil still unrevealed, some people had faith in us. And such faith is creative. It is one of the most supremely creative forces in this world. It does to a child what the spring sun and rain have been doing to the earth this last week: it brings out into leaf and flower what is latent there. But cynicism is a freezing thing and if it surrounds a child he will have no springtime for his mental or his moral power. In this sense, therefore, every one of us has been created by faith. You may be eminent and successful but you know well that there were times when you could have gone all to

pieces. You had it in you, as I had it in me, to make a desperate mess of life, and if we did not you know why: there were people who were not cynical about us, who tirelessly kept on having faith in us.

Let us get our eyes, then, clearly on this initial fact, that cynicism and faith are real forces. They effectually accomplish things in this world. Cynicism damns men; faith creates men. A cynical generation is one in which you can no more expect great manhood and womanhood to grow than you could expect tropical forests at the North Pole, and when a man against the present prevalence of cynicism pleads for faith in people he is pleading for the very life of the generation.

Now, cynicism always gathers to itself a philosophy and makes itself sound erudite. Cynicism has been doing that recently with reference to faith in people. It has developed the doctrine that heredity is everything, that we have the heredity, that we therefore are the chosen people and that, therefore, the Nordics should always slap themselves upon the chest and despise lesser breeds. Lothrop Stoddard has talked so much about that that one would like to try an experiment with Lothrop Stoddard himself. One would like to take Lothrop Stoddard when he was six months old and exchange him for a negro baby in the heart of Africa, of a similar age, and then let Lothrop Stoddard grow up in the negro tribe and let the negro child grow up in the finest Anglo-Saxon environment. Would heredity be everything? You know well that

Lothrop Stoddard would grow up a cannibal, that he would be afraid of ghosts and believe in witch doctors, that he would marry ten wives if he could possibly gain money enough to buy them, that he would eat his meat raw, and be petrified with fright the first time he saw an automobile, if he ever should see one. And you know well that the same night Lothrop Stoddard died of fright at a witch doctor's curse the negro who had been exchanged for him might very possibly put on evening dress and have a wonderful time listening to Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Heredity everything? That is nonsense.

You take an adventurous, courageous, high-spirited boy and let him be brought up in certain sections of New York and Brooklyn and he is likely to become a gangster, his highest ambition to pull off a resounding crime. And you let that same boy be brought up in a fine home and he will probably have another set of ambitions altogether. The same water, my friends, can make very different kinds of stream.

Heredity is important. Just as Jesus said, some start with one talent, some with five talents, some with ten. That is important. But what is more important than blood heredity is the social heritage under the constant pressure of which we grow up.

It is not simply a matter of idealism, therefore, but of common sense to rise above this cheap and easy cynicism about our human stock into faith in its possibilities. I recall a vow that I made during the War in France. God forgive me that I ever forgot it! As I

watched those boys come up from the ends of the earth, from every tribe and tongue and people under heaven, and saw the way they stood the gaff of that terrible situation, I vowed that never again would I be cynical about the possibilities of the human stock. It is essentially sound, and it would be magnificent if we could achieve a society that would treat all men decently from the time they are born.

I spent the other evening on East Third Street with a club of criminals that the Marshall Stillman Movement has gathered together. Every member of that club has a prison record. Nobody can be a member of that club without a criminal record. They made me an honorary member! Those ex-convicts are refreshing men. They helped to reëstablish my faith in humanity. No man, they say, has ever come from prison, joined that club, and then gone wrong again. And as I came home from that evening with criminals, I found myself singing the words of an old negro spiritual, "All God's Chillun Got Wings." Yes, they have. The wings may be embryonic; they may be so tightly folded you would not guess their presence; they may be sadly broken: but "all God's chillun got wings." At any rate, so far as I am concerned, I am going to live on the basis not of cynicism but of faith in people. You are sure I shall be fooled again and again. You are right. I shall be. That prodigal son may not come home, no matter how hard I believe in him, but I had rather be fooled nine times and then once believe in him so effectively that he will arise and

go unto his father. And, mark it! there is no use in talking about being a disciple of Jesus if you are too cynical to do that.

In the second place, we all have within us a conflict between cynicism, on the one side, and faith in social possibilities, upon the other. It is not strange that we should. When one thinks of what we fought the War to get and then what we got, when one watches the hardness of our economic struggle, the rancor of our inter-racial prejudices and the bitterness of our international life, one is inevitably tempted to be cynical. And yet every healthy-minded man knows there is something the matter with cynicism. What is it?

For one thing, as a matter of history the cynics have uniformly turned out to be wrong. The cynics said we never could have a democratic government but always must live under absolute monarchy. Well, we have had trouble enough with democracy and it is a pretty chaotic mess yet, but there is no one of us who would go back where the cynics said we had to stay. The cynics said we never could be rid of chattel slavery and they lifted the cry, "Cotton is king!" as though that settled it. But cotton was not king. And while, to be sure, the freeing of the slave has not proved an unqualified success, there is not one of us who would dream of going back. The cynics said we never could have public schools and berated with scorn the paternalistic policy that proposed to take education away from the monopoly of private institutions and try to give a chance to all the children of all the

people. But we did it. It is one of the proudest things we ever did and, so far from going back, we certainly are going on.

Cynics always start by posing as hard-headed wise men, and they always end by being soft-headed fools; that is one trouble with cynicism.

Can we be mistaken in thinking that that same thing is going to happen now? Look at our economic situation, for example. You know the cynics who say that business and morals have nothing to do with each other. Business, they think, is a hard, cruel war and it is nothing else. They are vexed when a minister talks even about applications of the Golden Rule to business. They are the hard-headed, shrewd, canny, wise men. "Business is business," they say. But is it?

Look at Russia in the throes of her gigantic and significant revolution. That economic revolution stands for the thing to which the whole Western world will almost certainly turn unless capitalism in this new generation can be made to serve more than it has the vital interests of the whole body of the people. But we in America are not much disturbed about that. We do not think that Bolshevism has much chance at us here. Why hasn't it? The reason is clear. American business, partly because it has had some wise leadership, partly because its hand has been forced by organized labor, partly because we have had a rich and enormously productive country to exploit, has shared the gains of industry with the people over a wider area than ever before in modern times. More people reap

more of the fruits of the nation's work than in any other land. I am far from being satisfied about our economic situation, as you know, but at least this is true: little by little wages have been raised; little by little laboring conditions have been improved; ownership of business has spread out over the population and the gains of business have been shared by the general public; little by little coöperative measures have given more people something to say about the conduct of the industry that their life depends on. We are a long way from the ideal but not since the great machines came into use have so many people reaped so large a proportion of the nation's industry as here.

That economic justice which we have so far managed to achieve is our one safety. We are as safe as we have been just and we are not one bit safer. Business is not business in the long run. Business is morals. Our security in this country today runs up to the boundary line of our economic justice and it does not run one inch beyond it. Our one bulwark against violent economic revolution is not our hardness, nor our shrewdness, nor our ability to keep any one down. Our one bulwark against violent economic revolution is the degree to which we have worked out fair play in industry. Therefore, a man has not simply ideals behind him but facts when he says to business: "Go on, raise wages wherever and whenever you can, improve laboring conditions as though your lives depended on it, cause ever wider areas of the people more largely to share in the fruits of industry, widen your coöperative

measures that more of the workers may have a democratic share in the conduct of the work to which they give their lives." Believe me or not, Jesus was a great economist. You found business on selfish shrewdness and inside of two generations you will lose business. You found business on fair play and even amid the economic revolution of the world you are likely to keep it.

Cynicism is not wisdom; it is suicide. It is suicide in two realms. If we are so cynical that we will not found industry on the Golden Rule, we will lose industry, and if we are so cynical that we will not found international life on coöperative measures like the League of Nations and the World Court we will lose civilization in the next war. And I suggest this epitaph for civilization's tomb: They sat in the seat of the scornful.

Finally, there is in every one of us a conflict between cynicism and faith in God, faith in the spiritual meaning of the universe. For you cannot keep cynicism in a compartment. If a man starts by being cynical about people and about social causes, he will ultimately be cynical about the whole significance of life. In the pulpit we are habitually sorry about or angry at those materialistic philosophers who in university classrooms teach agnosticism to our youth. But no philosopher starts materialism. Philosophers simply sum up and formulate its mental consequences. Materialism starts in the practical world where people really live. One of our college athletes, who capitalized his football

ability and cleaned up in a single year several times the amount of President Coolidge's salary, has put it neatly for us. "There are still dreamers," he says, "but they are deadened by the thought embodied in the phrase 'What is there in it for me?'—which is the great American slogan now."

That is where materialism starts, in the realm where people say, What is there in it for me? But it does not stop there. It grows like a upas tree until it covers the earth and reaches up to heaven. Then a cynical philosophy issues. Listen to this description of human life from one devotee: "a small but boisterous bit of the organic scum that for the time being coats part of the surface of one small planet." That is cynicism when it is full grown. That is sitting in the seat of the scornful when it is finished. Do you like it? Do you think it is true? Human life merely a small but boisterous bit of organic scum that for the time being coats part of the surface of one small planet—think of living on that when a man could live on "Now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be."

Dread cynicism as you would the Black Plague, and if you would be healthy and escape its infection keep closer company with Christ Jesus. If ever anybody in history had an excuse for being cynical it was He. His family thought Him crazy, His church thought Him a heretic and excommunicated Him, His country thought Him a traitor and crucified Him, His friends thought Him a failure and disowned Him. One of

those is enough. To have your family think you crazy —that is enough. To have your church excommunicate you as a heretic—that is enough. To have your country cry, Crucify, crucify! against you as a traitor —that is enough. To have your friends think you a failure and disown you—that is enough. But to have all four in the brief span of one short lifetime—Oh! too much! Yet, so mistreated, what has Jesus been doing for us all these centuries? Making us believe in man, making us believe in a kingdom of righteousness upon the earth, making us believe in a good God, burning into the human heart the fairest faiths and hopes that the human heart ever dared to entertain until His very Cross has ceased being a badge of tragedy and has become the center of song. If you would keep wholesome in this cynical generation you would better keep close to that radiant and undiscourageable life!

## The One-Thing Man

*By* Frederick F. Shannon, D.D., central church, chicago

*"He answered and said, Whether He be a sinner, I know not; one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see."*

—st. john ix – 25

I AM inclined to set down this blind man as a logician of the first order. Knowing nothing of the sinuous steps in the processes of formal logic, yet is he unanswerably argumentative, tenaciously aware of something he refuses to let go of. Born blind, groping through his darkened years until manhood's estate, one day the Light of the World broke across his enshadowed path and thenceforth he began to view the universe with other, larger eyes.

At this juncture, enemies of the Master pounce upon him, endeavoring to beat his fact-logic out of him with cudgels of prejudice, malice, ignorance, and other weapons stored up in the black arsenals of hatred. But his opponents made a sorry job of it. Not only does he refuse to fall back before their furious onslaught; he is aggressive, positive, acute, wise with the old wisdom of reality at the heart of things.

I think of him as "The One-Thing Man," recalling the statement concerning a modern world-figure, of whom it is said that he had "a single-track mind."

Such a mind may be regarded, of course, in a disparaging spirit; or, on the other hand and viewed in the large, a single-track mind may be a magnificent creation. It all depends upon the mind—*why* it is going, *where* it is going, the *purpose* of its going, and *what* it sees on all sides as it flashes along. No train, however splendidly equipped, ever uses more than a single track at once—not without damage, perhaps even irreparable loss. Likewise, there is something germinal, creative, dynamic in the certitude of this one-thing man. An expert in major matters, he steadfastly refuses to be thrown off his center by minor details. Once and for all, his determination is voiced in my text; once and for all, also, here is the authority which can never be repealed or superseded—the authority of Christian experience: "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see."

Let us think, first, of the *unifying power* of this one-thing man, or, if you please, of Christian experience. "Whether he be a sinner I know not: *one thing* I know." Stripped of sham and bared to the bone, here is one of the supreme debates in the whole history of mind. A man with his once dead eyes becomes a merciless as well as a merciful logician. He is merciful because he loves the truth; he is merciless because he hates sham; but whether merciful or merciless, he is sure of one thing: That his physical blindness has given place to physical sight. There may be one—two—a score—a thousand—a million things he does not know, may never know; but *one thing*—well, here

is a flash of consciousness that is deep, steady, intelligent, aware of its own center, holding its frictionless poise while the universe keeps on its many-minded way.

Thus fortified behind his impregnable walls of unity, he drops a spiritual and mental explosive into the camp of his enemies—a bomb which is exasperatingly disconcerting. How do we know? Because "then they stormed at him." Unable to answer his argument, to explain his fact, to budge him from his center, "they stormed at him"; they blew up a strong wind of words; they set in motion a psychologic cyclone of cynicism; they released a Euroclydon of agnosticism uproarious with tornadoes of dogmatism. Yet there he stands upon the rock of his *one thing*, calmly serene amid the surging seas of hate and misunderstanding that lash his "inaccessible home." Why, it is simply great—too great for words.

Now, in the light of this nameless man's physical and intellectual experience, is there not a clue to the way in which the modern Christian may get his own mental and spiritual bearings? I believe there is. Take it on the physical side of things. From the time man began to think, we see him on the scent, like a mental hound, of the idea of physical unity and order. As I write these words, I happen to be looking from the window of a Pullman car at a pile of buildings in which a great university is housed. Quite impossible to trace, absolutely, the "ins" and "outs," the "ups" and "downs," the backward and forward move-

ments of the human mind in its quest of physical unity from a far-off antiquity up to the time it housed its instruments in these university buildings, yet the search is there, written into the very history of mind itself. As a climax to that long quest for unity and orderliness in the cosmos, here is the latest confession of one of the greatest of living astronomers: "To an astronomer the most remarkable and interesting thing about that part of the physical universe with which he has become acquainted is not its vast extent in space, nor the number and great masses of its stars, nor the violent forces that operate in the stars, nor the long periods of astronomical time, but that which holds him awestruck is the perfect orderliness of the universe and the majestic succession of the celestial phenomena. From the tiny satellites in the solar system to the globular clusters, the galaxy and exterior galaxies there is no chaos, there is nothing haphazard and there is nothing capricious. The orderliness of the universe is the supreme discovery in science; it is that which gives us hope that we shall be able to understand not only the exterior world but also our own bodies and our own minds."

The fact is, the history of mind in its long romantic and tragic quest is an Iliad, an epic, a heroism, a hymn —a song not only of "degrees," but a song of unity and orderliness; thus have we come to think of the unity of Matter, the unity of Man, and, back of all, the unity of God. The mysterious doors of the universe swing both ways—inward and outward. They

swing outward from Spirit to Ether, from Ether to Light, from Light to Matter; they swing inward from Matter to Light, from Light to Ether, from Ether to Spirit. But in whatever direction they swing, God is behind and within, on either side, on all sides of them. "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one."

Here, moreover, is a unifying power of soul which offers an apologetic that is final. Now, there is a finality that is dead, static, immobile; there is also a finality that is alive, dynamic, continuously moving into something rich and strange as well as something that affirms its own everlastingness while it journeys along with and within the soul. Whatever we may term it, it is the result of a change in one's personal center—a shifting of the soul-gear from law to intermediate, and, finally, to high—the highest of all. Call it repentance or conversion or new birth or any other name that fits the fact; yet, as Carlyle suggests, it is the vast inscrutable wonder of these twenty centuries.

For myself, I have come to regard the evidential value of atheism, in its various forms, as a positive argument for the fact of God in Christ. Sometimes men fairly rage with downright infidelity; sometimes they merely swell up with haughty agnosticism; sometimes they just gape with dumb uncertainty. Still, no matter how they came by this attitude, do they not present the spectacle of being abnormal in a normal universe? An Australian physician has written a volume on "The Great Abnormals." Some of his subjects are insane, some are partially unbalanced,

some are moral perverts. It is not time for a competent thinker to give us a volume on "The *Greatest* Abnormals?" And by the greatest abnormals I mean the intellectually sane who are nevertheless spiritually stupid or insane. Undoubtedly among these are some of the living psychologists of the behavioristic school; or, going farther back, Haeckel, who held that man is "an affair of chance; the froth and fume at the wave-top of a sterile ocean of matter." Now, surely, any one who holds such a philosophy of man and at the same time is seemingly sane, has earned for himself a conspicuous place among "The *Greatest* Abnormals."

A certain lawyer of this school says that life is a drab affair; that man, not knowing where he comes from or where he goes to, is the victim of blind forces, and, therefore, morally unaccountable for his character and conduct. Two things should be said in answer to this kind of thinking. In the first place, this particular man, according to his friends, is much better than his philosophy. They assert his kindliness, his humaneness, his championship of the social under-dog. Now, if this is true, where did he get his humanitarian instincts? Are they and he "just an affair of chance" a bit of scum floating on the surface of the waters of being, or are they effects produced by certain causes rising out of a First Cause? Ordinarily, thinkers reason from cause to effect,—except, extraordinarily! when they set down false premises and reach false conclusions in matters of religion. The mental twist

of the *irreligiously* insane would be amusing if it were not saddening.

The second thing to be said is this: The human soul is in duty bound to protect itself against any such attitude. "Life is a pretty drab affair," says our Christless humanitarian. Well, why not, if there is no God, no Soul, no One Thing that can be known in the midst of many things that cannot be known? If some people gave a tenth as much of their time in an honest endeavor to find out the fact of God in Christ as they do in trying either to disprove or obscure that fact, I would be willing to bet my soul that they, too, would be able to find the white-hot certainty that continues to burn the cold chill off the edge of many uncertainties. "By their fruits ye shall know them" may be spoken not only of those who live with Christ in God, but quite as emphatically, also, of those who have an intellectually good logic engine pulling a long train of spiritually empty cars. At this point I was not sure of my figure. Turning to the conductor, I asked: "Captain, what do you call a train of empty cars?" "Why," he flashed back, "we call 'em dead-head equipment." That is it, precisely! An average logic engine drawing a spiritually "dead-head equipment" of godlessly empty cars—coming from nowhere, stopping nowhere, going nowhere. "By their fruits ye shall know them"—unbelievers and agnostics and infidels as well as prophets and saints and martyrs. Allowing a million minor things to run over and away with them, they are tragically unaware of the "one

thing" of stupendous meaning—the glowing inner unity which gives wealth and harmony to both the apparent and real disunities of life.

II

Moreover, this one-thing man, as a type of Christian experience at its best, asks us to consider a second proposition. It is the *reassuring power* of the faith of God in Christ. No one questions the worth of assurance in common, everyday affairs; yet nowhere is certainty more fundamental than in religion. "One of the dominant notes of modern life," says a thinker, "is not so much unbelief as uncertainty." Accepting the statement for its discriminating value, there is no blinking the fact that overmuch uncertainty ends in surrender to forthright unbelief.

Now one of the unquestioned values of the assurance created by personal contact with God in Christ is this: It victoriously outwits all theories as such, whether grounded in theology, philosophy, or science. I hardly need to pause to say that all helpful theories have their place; what I do affirm is that all of them are incapable of formulating or expressing *all* there is for the soul hid with Christ in God.

Reverting to this old story, see how the blind man turned upon his tormentors and grilled them unmercifully. Disciples of Moses, yet they did not know whence the Christ is. "Why herein is the marvel," he answered back, "that ye know not whence He is, and yet He opened mine eyes." Consider, too, his

appeal to history: experience puts into his grasp a rapier of logic which cuts through fancy to the heart of fact—whatever fact may be, wherever fact may lead. "Since the world began"—his words come with measured majesty—"it was never heard that any one opened the eyes of one born blind." In short, there may or may not have been remarkable cures in the past; but never before—not since the world began—did one *born* with dead eyes have them opened. Not theologically clever, nor philosophically acute, nor psychologically verbose, nor scientifically instructed, yet he knows that something unique in the history of the race has happened to him. The fact is what he wants; he himself is the fact; let other explain the fact as they may choose. Weigh, furthermore, his conclusion—a thunderbolt from the heavens of inductive philosophy sixteen centuries before Francis Bacon was born: "*If this man were not from God, He could do nothing.*"

Here, then, is the fore-runner of the type of assurance which makes the disciples of Christ equal to the emergencies arising in each and all generations. I have seen a few specimens in my own lifetime. The first was Dwight L. Moody. As a country boy, I came to the World's Fair held here in Chicago. Vivid, indeed, is the memory of how that great new world of industry, commerce, art, and science burst upon my wondering eyes. I was filling the rôle of a printer's devil in those far-off days. I little dreamed then as my employer, Milton F. Conley, later announced when

I preached my first sermon in Louisa, Ky., that I was to be promoted from "devil to divine." Fascinated as I was by anything pertaining to printing, I remember how I used to stand before that giant press exhibited by *The Chicago Daily News* and dream of the day when I might possibly be the foreman of all the pressmen who ran it. But one of the other ineffaceable memories of that period is hearing Moody preach in a downtown theatre at noon. I don't remember what he said; but I do remember *Moody*. It is the memory of a man who had experienced something too great to be told; of one who knew spiritually where he was and where he was going; of one who overflowed with joyousness attuned to great good common sense. Now, there were a lot of things Moody did not know and made no pretense of knowing. Like Robert Louis Stevenson, for example—and *others*—he never really learned how to spell. Mr. Fleming H. Revell, his brother-in-law, once told me this story: Sitting in the writing room of a Philadelphia hotel, Moody asked, "Flem, how do you spell Philadelphia—*Fil* or *Fel?*" Yet Henry Drummond, a man with many-sided human contacts as wide as the world, declared Moody was the greatest human he had ever met. And the greatness of Moody consisted in the fact that he had met Christ in life's way, that he *knew* he had met Him, and was assured that he would continue to meet Him forever.

Some years ago it was my privilege to be one of the speakers at the annual banquet of the Civil War

veterans in Brooklyn. The other speaker was General O. O. Howard. Along with many others who were privileged to know him, I shall never forget that nobleman of God. He carried an armless sleeve about with him, having lost his right arm at the battle of Fair Oaks on June 1, 1862. He also carried a strong, gentle, beautiful face as he went to and fro in the earth—a face whose inner smile refused to come off. Where did he get that smile? Some of it came through his ancestors, some through cultivation, but the most of it came, according to his own confession, from the deathless light Christ struck into his soul while he was kneeling one night before a table, with his Bible on it, in the old barracks room at Tampa. Next morning a fellow-officer said to him, "Howard, I hear that you have become a Christian." "Yes," answered Howard, "I have, and I'm not ashamed of it." "Why," the other continued, "I can show you a hundred inconsistencies in the Bible." "Perhaps you can," rejoined Howard, "but you can't show me that last night I did not surrender to the Lord Jesus Christ, and I've been so happy I couldn't sleep. I can wait God's time for an explanation of the inconsistencies." For years Howard was a teacher of mathematics at West Point; but in that old barracks room at Tampa he himself was taught something which kept him through the years and beyond—even as he journeyed the way of the unreturning. Do we not need more of this quality of faith today? It is the assurance born of experience when God has His own conscious beginnings in His

way with man, moving definitely out of the realm of theory into the soul He has made for His true dwelling-place.

I officiated at the funeral of the widow of Jerry McAuley. I knew her and her second husband, the late Bradford Lee Gilbert, father of the modern skyscraper, very well. They were two of the godliest folk it has been my fortune to know; and "godliness," said John G. Wooley, "is the splendor of character which gives the shine of omnipotence to action." These people had both the shine and the action—a kind of omnipotence with which God alone weapons men and women who act as if He were, and are then assured by processes at once too subtle and large to be caught within the molds of formal logic, that He is that final and supreme fact which the soul was designed to *know*.

Standing by the side of her casket in a downtown mission hall in New York, did I even intimate that that God-intoxicated woman—an unusual individual as well as a unique social force—was uncertain as to the redemptive power which had lifted her, her husband, and thousands to whom they ministered, out of the black abysses of sin and degradation up to solid spiritual roadways leading on and ever on to the sweetly inviting homes of unfathomable reality? No; I said that this greatly transformed human knew, like Paul, *Whom*—not just *what*—she believed; that there were a multitude of things she did not and could not know while in the flesh; but one thing she was hilari-

ously and songfully convinced of: that she had been marvelously found of God in Christ, and, through that finding, had been privileged to drink from the River of Life—even the River whose waters fertilize the roots of the universe.

III

There is still another fact which this one-thing man challenges us to consider, and that is the *clarifying power* of Christian experience. "I was blind, now I see." He is referring, of course, to the purely physical change wrought upon his dead eyes by the Infinite Optician. But in saying purely physical change I do not wish, even suggestively, to minify the majesty, mystery, and miraculousness of the Master's cure. There are those—excellent people, too—who are not kindly disposed to the "works," "signs," "miracles" of our Lord. Very well; every mind for itself, and a wondrous Heaven, let us hope, for all. But believing, as I do, that the Lord Christ Himself is the most transcendent, awe-inspiring fact yet disclosed to our part of the universe, everything else is comparatively simple. I would measure my words here; for I am no longer on a swift-moving, limited train, but in the midst of one of the loveliest of all of God's Acres. I am prone upon the grass, level with these graves around me; I am brooded over by a turquoise sky, perfumed by flowers, sung to by birds of gorgeous plumage—yea, and surrounded on every hand by the tombs of my ancestors. Moreover, I am soul-deep in June—

indeed, this is June's last lingering day for 1927. Thus, you see, I am in one of those immortally jocund moods and blessed situations which dispose one to tell the little bit of truth it has been his privilege to glimpse while touring through this part of the vast cosmos.

We talk of the wonderful works of God, and we do well. These insect-filled yards of space about me are teeming with mystery. The ant which is scaling this blade of grass at my feet represents, Darwin thought, the largest brain-power in small compass ever unfolded to his perceiving mind. Well, this ant, for aught I know, may regard himself as he climbs his blade of grass, an ant pioneer out in space—a kind of twentieth-century steeplejack walking up the outside of a forty-story building; or, perchance, if he be an unusually daring citizen of the ant kingdom, he may regard himself as a Lindbergh, a Chamberlain, or a Byrd of the air. However, this is what I want to say: I think all other works and facts of our human world, in comparison with Christ, as of antlike proportions—somewhat like a blade of grass alongside the Woolworth Tower, or like the ant himself as compared with our human birdmen. *Get God in Christ, and there is nothing more to get, though you may be all your immortality getting it, so inexhaustibly much is there to be gotten.* Walking on the water, multiplying the loaves and fishes, straightening out withered hands and limbs, opening blind eyes, raising the dead, turning water into wine, forgiving sins—these belong to the

great imponderables of the moral universe; but they are, after all, as secondary to Christ as the universe is secondary to God. The stars in their courses belong to a lower order of grandeur than the Christ Who is continuously active in and through the spiritual forces of which He is the unique and ageless Master.

Now, we must certainly reckon the clarifying power of Christian experience as one of the transcendent facts of history. Go where you will, this sky-born music will break in upon you in some form or other; not only the New Testament, but human life itself witnesses to the truth that God has never left Himself unrevealed anywhere or any time. Yet facts compel us to say that God in Christ prosecutes a process of regeneration whereby, in the words of Professor William James, "a self hitherto divided and consciously wrong, inferior, and unhappy, becomes unified, and consciously right, superior, and happy, in consequence of a firmer hold upon religious realities." Does not the great psychologist lay bare the heart of the matter? Only, it is not merely through our own "firmer hold upon religious realities," but through the *firmer hold which religious realities get upon us*, that spiritual blindness gradually recedes before the dawning light of God in Christ.

Consider, therefore, this clarifying power of the one-thing man in the sphere of religious insight, of spiritual understanding. One might assess many varieties of knowledge and types of human beings for illustration. But as there are two books here in the grass

beside me, I will choose from them. "Have you never marked the eyes of a man," says one, "who has seen the world he has lived in: the eyes of the sea-captain, who has watched his life through the changes of the heavens; the eyes of the huntsman, nature's gossip and familiar; the eyes of the man of affairs, accustomed to command in moments of exigency? You are at once aware that they are eyes which can see." These words are from Woodrow Wilson's essay, "On Being Human," first published in *The Atlantic Monthly* thirty years ago. Pope Benedict says that Wilson's mind was the only first-class mind the World War produced. Agreeing with His Holiness that the Great War President had a first-class mind, I do not agree with him that the war produced it. The mind was there already, trained, prepared, waiting for the cataclysm which merely *declared* the intellectual and spiritual readiness which had been in process for more than fifty years. "*You are at once aware that they are eyes which can see.*" Don't forget that sentence; we shall come back to it directly.

The second book here in the grass beside me is *The Christlike God*, by Bishop Francis J. McConnell. If he, like Wilson, were dead, it would be entirely becoming to speak of him as one of the most wholesome, as well as the subtlest, fairest minds of our generation. Having read in the field of Christian apologetics for a good many years, I regard *The Christlike God* as in a class by itself. Ponder these sentences: "If we are to have a God at all, we may just as well have one

worth having."—"My body itself may be the seat of microscopic universes."—"Of course the Divine must know Himself through and through."—"If so much mind is required to read off the processes of the universe, it does not seem far-fetched to assume that the universe is the expression of mind." This sentence, I think, is the best putting of the philosophy of theism ever made.—"The revelation of the relevation in Christ may continue indefinitely."

I have quoted from two of the most competent of modern minds—full-bred human beings, to paraphrase Woodrow Wilson's words, who love a run afield with their understanding. Why are we at once aware that these men have eyes which can see? Contrast them, for example, Wilson with Clemenceau, and McConnell with Santayana. No fair-minded person would question the intellectual abundance of the French statesman or the Spanish philosopher. Yet is there not a marked difference in the undertones of the unbelievers as compared with the overtones of the avowed disciples of Christ? It is not too much to say that we are immediately in a changed intellectual and spiritual climate the moment we cross the human frontiers represented by these four men. What makes the difference? Certainly, nothing less than the clarifying power of God in Christ. "Whereas I was blind, now I see." This is the good confession of men and women of high degree and low. The Christlike God does turn a steady, supersolar blaze, at once golden and illuminating, into the depths of human consciousness. Then

does the one-thing man become big enough for anything—anywhere—up and down the path of Duty within the worlds. And all because, as in the experience and words of Robert Browning:

> "That One Face, far from vanish, rather grows,
> Or decomposes but to recompose,
> Become my universe that feels and knows."

## Creative Freedom

*By* Lynn Harold Hough, D.D., central methodist episcopal church, detroit

*"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under law, but under grace."*

—ROMANS VI – 14

FOUR hundred years ago Luther wrote his famous treatise, "The Freedom of the Christian Man." With unhesitating paradox he set forth the Lordly liberty and the loving servitude of the Christian man. Over fifteen hundred years before Luther, Paul had passed through the most desperate personal struggle in respect to the same matters and had set forth in intense and burning words the charter of the emancipation of the Christian who for all his freedom remained the most willing slave of Jesus Christ. Today we find the problem pressing hard for a contemporary solution. Many restless eyes all about us tell the tale of an emancipation which has not set free, and of a liberty which has left the taste of dust and death upon the lips. The old, old questions lift their heads again. And even in these bustling amazingly active days we cannot ignore them and we cannot content ourselves with superficial answers.

# CREATIVE FREEDOM

## I

A good deal of the human story has been a long and dreary march of slaves. The valleys of the Euphrates, the Nile and the Tiber have had each their own tale of heavy and cruel servitude. To untold millions of people life has consisted of doing the will of some other person whose power could not be resisted. Even where there has been no political slavery often the economic conditions of life have made men slaves. The freedom to starve has never been a very highly prized possession, and where economic pressure has created hard and bitter conditions, usually most men however unwillingly have made some sort of terms for the sake of keeping life going. Society itself is a kind of stern master. When we accept its sanctions we do not in the least mind their strength. But when we give lip and hand service while our hearts are hot and resentful we experience a contradiction in our own lives which is a very tragic and disintegrating experience. And our unhappiness is none the less acute if the standards are high and gracious sanctions coming out of the noblest experiences of the race, sanctions which we ought to love, but in whose presence we actually find ourselves restless and unhappy. Whenever a man gives outward conformity to standards which for either good or bad reasons he hates in his heart that man is a slave.

The ugliness of slavery is sure at last to lie in the fact that as it does its will with a human life its

victim ceases to be a person and becomes a thing. He ceases to be in a fine sense an end, and becomes in a hard and ugly sense a means. Slavery is the contradiction of the very meaning and glory of the personal life. It disintegrates the fibers of personality itself. It finds a man and when its work is done it leaves a machine.

The situation is very much complicated by the fact that it has always been true, and never so true as now, that the efficiency of many a practical enterprise is for the time at least increased if the service of a large number of responsive automata can be secured. To press the button and to secure immediate practical results is the requirement of mechanical efficiency. For the moment at least human machines seem much more satisfactory than growing persons. There are times when personality seems an impertinence. Bridge building, the construction of railroads and all the endless repetition of the automatic workers may easily suggest the negation of personality. And a short-sighted technique of what calls itself scientific organization may actually work out in such a fashion that life is sinking to lower levels all the while. The machine is paid for, if one may use such a figure, by the very lifeblood of personality itself.

To be sure in the long run personality has its sure revenge. It is only a temporary efficiency which is secured by the depletion of the vital forces of manhood. It is happy workers doing work so organized that personality comes to its own who form the basis

of ever increasing industrial efficiency. You cannot dwarf human life and increase production indefinitely. The automatic worker must have a human life away from his round of routine for the sake of the machine he is helping to make, as well as for his own sake, and for the sake of the human life of the world.

The desire for quick returns however is quite likely to lead men to ignore such facts as these. Just as we waste a ton of coal for every ton we take out of the ground, just as we carelessly harvest our supply of timber, so we are likely to use up our human material with little thought of the future. We think all too little of the necessity of forestation. And we think, one is tempted to say, scarcely at all of its equivalent in human life. So we turn persons into things with little thought of the meaning of the process.

II

Something deep in the nature of man revolts from the whole process which makes him a slave. If he has been cringing with lip service in the presence of standards in the life of the community which do not actually command his loyalty, he comes at last to hate these sanctions with a bitter hatred. If the daily round of his life leaves no place for the expression and the growth of his personal life he comes at last to have an attitude of angry rebellion.

It is quite likely that this revolt so easily understood and analyzed will work no end of havoc when it

has gathered momentum and has come to the fullness of its power. For revolt breeds the love of destruction for its own sake, and a good many fair and precious things are likely to be caught in the destructive fury of the storm.

At the moment we are observing great numbers of lusty and energetic people who are very angry at the historic standards of good living in personal and social relations. They quite hate the sense of inferiority which is ready to descend upon them if they admit the validity of these standards without changing a good many aspects of their lives. They feel that the society which firmly upholds such standards is all the while making slaves of men. They are determined to have self-expression even if that means what wise men in the past have called lawless indulgence. They are apostles of revolt who would put down the standard of control and would lift up the standard of license.

Of course it is an old dilemma. And if we are not too self-conscious to learn from human experience, history has a good deal to teach us. There was the same revolt in the Italian Renaissance. It began by eating the forbidden fruit of alluring vices. It ended with poisoning people whose presence in the world was an inconvenience, and in all sorts of other hardened sordid cruelties. Indeed the escape from the Ten Commandments through violating them has never kept its promise of giving a new freedom. The experience is like the attempt to escape from the law

of gravitation by defying it. The result is likely to be at least a bad fall. The philosophy of license is really a network of clever lies. The apostles of license are all the while promising that which they can never give. You cannot become free physically by defying the laws of nature. And you cannot become free morally by defying the laws of ethics. Even our age with all its love of the experimental approach to reality may be reminded that this approach has been tried with approximate thoroughness in a good many generations and has always failed. Some self-conscious youngsters talk as if nobody had ever broken the Seventh Commandment until their arrival on the human scene.

The industrial and economic situation has also elements of disturbing complexity. To be sure the case is much clearer here. For you do have a social organization which often ignores fundamental human values. And all this must be met with frank and unhesitating criticism. And it must be changed. But even here it is all too easy for zestful reformers who are strong in their enthusiasms and not always so strong in their understanding of the elements of the problems to make serious mistakes. It is all too easy to throw out the baby with the bath.

When a passionate apostle of revolt condemns all those industrial methods which sacrifice the very values which make men human we follow him heartily. But when he goes on to dream of a world where all will go well without discipline, and self-control, and sac-

rifice and the doing of difficult work, grave hesitations emerge. Too often social revolution has failed through the excesses of the revolutionists. Too often a hatred of stability and order gets into the heart of a man who thinks that his hatred is only for industrial tyranny. The excesses of the peasants in the days of Luther put the clock back in Germany in a fashion from which that land has not recovered in four hundred years. The wages of license are reaction. And the greatest foe of progress in the industrial world is the man who mistakes license for freedom. This way madness lies both in dealing with the problems of the individual and in facing the needs of society.

III

The New Testament has a way of turning out to be curiously adequate when we go back to it after a really searching analysis of modern problems. Nowhere is this more clearly true than when we go back to the Gospels and the Epistles with the dilemmas we have just been considering. Whatever else may be asserted of Him, Jesus was the great free man of all the world. He was the first free man in whose heart law truly and completely lived. He was an incarnation of that law whose love is perfect freedom.

In a sense Jesus is the very living expression of a series of paradoxes. And there is no more perfect illustration of this statement than the fashion in which He found freedom without license, and stability without slavery. In His own life at least the Ten Com-

mandments were set to music. He transcended them by His perfect expression of every sanction for which they stood. Not by defying them but by loving them He secured a position of moral and spiritual mastery which included them and yet went beyond them. In Him love found more than the fulfilling of the law. It found the transfiguration of the law. The things which men are all the while separating He brought together in an astonishing harmony. From Him an apostle of revolt may learn the secret of having all the liberty he desires. But that liberty consists of freedom in law and not of freedom from law. In one age after another He has commanded the complete surrender and the entire loyalty of some of the most daring spirits whom the period has produced. They have felt at first dimly and later with understanding that He possessed all that great and far-reaching freedom which they desired. And they have been astonished at last to find that this freedom was built upon a solid foundation of loyalty to the very sanctions which they had been inclined to repudiate. It is really a mark of an immature spirit to suppose that you must fall into ways of lawless indulgence in order to be free. Only minds which have not become capable of understanding discrimination confuse a warm hearth fire with a burning building. There ought after all to be no great difficulty in apprehending the difference between heat distributed through a great edifice on a winter's day, and the destruction of the edifice in a red passion of flames. But we have sadly

to admit that intense young spirits in every age have gotten into desperate confusion at this point. The first Great Freeman not only taught the distinction: He illustrated it. His life was always burning and never consumed. For the law itself became a noble passion in His life.

It is significant enough that this matter of relating the deathless sanctions of life to a free and growing personality was centered in the struggle and victory of the personal life of the Apostle Paul, and was kept central in his teaching as a great evangelist. As a young man Paul almost sold his freedom. He almost surrendered to a hard, and mechanical, and rigid code. He found the experience terribly bitter and baffling and tragic. And the greatest experience of his life was the discovery that religion puts a new heart into the old loyalties, and makes the moral law not a slave master with a whip in his hand, but a great friend with a smile on his face.

There are no more significant writings for our time than Paul's letters to the Galatians and the Romans. For these set forth that view of freedom with ethical insight at its heart, and of moral demand becoming joyous passion which is the most vital matter in Paul's gospel. The freedom which does not emancipate finds diagnosis and prescription here which simply must not be passed by. If Mr. H. L. Mencken were told that the real failure of his mental life is to be found in his incapacity for the comprehension of Paul's letters to the Galatians and the Romans he would doubtless

feel a kind of amused and cynical surprise. But of course that is just the reason why the editor of the *American Mercury* can never be an American John the Baptist. There is a good deal of contemporary writing which is an attempt to rehabilitate discredited vices. It seems fairly safe to say that Paul will have a great and penetrating word of summons and challenge and rebuke to say to men and women in our time as long as the distinction between liberty and license is one which their minds do not compass, and one to which their hearts do not respond.

IV

Using the mechanistic view of life as a basis for thought it would be possible to argue that everything is completely determined beforehand. Such an analysis would be very impressive until one remembered that when two men are sitting at a table one somehow does manage to ask the other to pass him the salt. And in spite of the reign of law every important act of our lives is based upon the unhesitating assumption that we might have done something else had we desired. We live in a world of natural law, yet we are not under the law. By the very process of obeying we find liberty. Men calculated strains and pressures and weights and built the Gothic cathedral which almost seems free from earth. Engineers work out the most detailed mathematical schemes in a similar fashion and build the great bridge whose mighty span is a thing of beauty and of endless serv-

ice. A daring lad in perfect obedience to physical laws completely transcends them and crosses the Atlantic in a day and a half. There is something creative about such freedom. It is completely emancipated. It has made friends with law. Its very emancipation lies in perfect obedience.

The same principles apply in the realm of individual and social morality. You cannot build a great bridge of conduct without calculating all the weight and pressure and strain. The structure which is a defiance of moral law will go down in the flood. The structure which is an expression of the fundamental rightness of things will stand under the severest test. The Old Testament prophet who gladly put the law in his heart found far more freedom than ever comes to the apostle of license who surrenders to a lawless heart.

Our problems of industrial organization must be met in just this spirit. We cannot solve the problem of the automatic worker by breaking the machines. We must organize leisure for the protection and upbuilding of personality. And by short hours of automatic work and zestful hours of such use of leisure that mind, body and soul are developed the whole level of our life can be lifted. We must organize the whole scheme of life for the development of personality as well as for the material output of our factories. And the very organization for such results will open the way for a creative freedom among all the workers of the Republic.

Law is an ugly thing if one approaches it in the attitude of hard revolt. It will break us if we defy it. But if we love it at the very moment when we have expressed our loyalty we will acquire a vast and transcendent freedom. The Great Freeman meant us all to be free. The brave apostle who assured the Romans that they were not under the law was in the same sentence requiring noble obedience. Creative freedom is found at the point where the law meets spontaneous love and love transfigures and fulfills the law.

## The Same Yesterday, Today, and Forever

*By* Burris A. Jenkins, D.D., Linwood Boulevard Christian Church, Kansas City

*"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever."*
—Hebrews xiii – 8

TO PREACH as if one had only one sermon to make gives one pause, and induces a rather sobering atmosphere. If a man had only one more address to make, a sort of farewell, his sense of proportion and perspective should be rendered acute. As Joseph Fort Newton has said, however, every preacher really has just one sermon. He varies it by dressing it up in different costumes and presenting it in differing conditions; yet it is the same old message, which might well be put into a single sermon.

The text I have chosen is, I think, the second one that I used when starting in as a boy preacher. The first one was, of course, John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son," which has served as a first text for so many thousands of fledgling ministers. I suppose I used it first just because I thought I ought; but the one I used second, which is my present text, is the one which captured my boyhood imagination and has never lost its dominance. All through the years, now nearly forty of them, this

text has furnished the key to my one sermon. I may have wandered from it, I may have bungled the presentation of it, sometimes doubtless people have wondered what earthly connection there could be between what I was saying and this guiding principle of all my thought and utterance; and yet I hope that down deep underneath, like the matted roots of alfalfa, everything I have said has been tied up with this master text.

It is not to be wondered at that this age of ours should question whether Jesus fits our time and civilization. He was oriental, we are occidental. He was pastoral, we are industrial. He was thoroughly an idealist, so spiritual that he seemed to have little connection with the life bound up in material things; while we are intensely material, concerned with machines and products and trading and creature comforts. He had no concern with laboratories and libraries, while our life is intimately connected with the researches and the findings of science. He is two thousand years away from our time and more than two thousand years away from our thought. He belongs to yesterday; how can we say of Him, then, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever"?

More than that, our age is actually asking whether the picture we draw of Him is borne out by the facts, whether He is not an ideal that has slowly been evolved through two thousand years, an abstraction, an idea rather than a real being. Comparison frequently has been made to the Lenin cult which is now

arising in Russia, a worship of a flesh and blood man who died only yesterday and who embodied in himself the revolution by which Russia has sought freedom. Some say that in a few centuries he will be a god, that he is almost one now.

I will not pause to argue the historicity of Jesus, but will concede for the time being the utmost that can be said against it. Suppose He is an ideal, an abstraction, purely subjective in the minds and hearts of His followers, with but slender connection with a historical being, the ideal is none the less valuable, none the less powerful. That abstraction, if you will, is more influential in the world, however far we fall short of its realization, than any other ideal known to man. If your mind challenges that statement, then think a little while about Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore, who more than any other two men represent the millions of India and are perhaps nearer Christians than any two men equally prominent in all our Christian world. They are not church members, but they are Christians. It is not a question of how powerful is the church, nor even of how nearly does the Christian world live up to Christ; but the real question is how deep down in the hearts of myriads of men and women east and west does the Christ ideal strike its root. Men attack the church, and no wonder; men assail avowed Christians, and it is not strange; but who assails Jesus, real or ideal, his teachings, his life and his death? Nobody worthy of notice, the wide world round. What he was yesterday that he is today, and

he is increasing in power over the hearts of men, in prestige in the thoughts of men, and in influence in the lives of men.

I am aware of the struggle going on down in the valleys, the shadows, and the mists where we live, underneath the tall, quiet, snowclad summit which is Christ. I know that the view of Him is obscured in the darkness of our little lives. We are absorbed in factories and half blinded by their dust and smoke; we are pushing over the roads of the world to carry our products and to trade them, our heads reeling in the heat and the dust clouds of the world's highways; we eat and drink and dance and laugh and fight, while the clouds of our barrages and of our poison gas shut out the view of Him. Nevertheless, all the time within us we are conscious of that white summit, that White Comrade—real or ideal, it makes no difference—and we cannot be rid of Him if we would. He is the same today as He was yesterday for all who have ever heard of Him. He seizes upon the mind and the imagination and His hold can never be shaken loose. He wrestles with us like a God.

I am quite well aware, too, of the proud scientific spirit of our time and our tendency to train all our thought in the lines of scientific investigation and achievement. It seems as if our wonders would never cease. Resolutely we have subdued the earth, the sea, the air, and now even the ether. We are busy improving all our discoveries, prolonging life, lessening pain, promoting comfort, ease and rapidity in all our doings.

We are delighted with ourselves and the wonders we can perform; but so irruptive is the human spirit that it bursts up through all these material occupations and diversions, like the spirit of a child tired with its complex and rapid play, to reach up after an ideal that towers above our toys and our gyrations. We are even declaring now that our science is to invade the realm of the spirit with increasingly wonderful conquests, as it has been doing of late already, and that within the dark chambers of the soul we shall witness the miracles of science in the days that are just at hand. All the time, however, hearts are hungry, minds are restless and dissatisfied. Stimulate the glands of internal secretion as you will, the more complex life becomes the more we are bewildered, and hearts break just as they have always done. We need a power not ourselves that makes for sympathy, encouragement, righteousness, and smooths the intricate paths of life for our feet. No matter how sophisticated we become, the peasant Christ has a word and a heart-beat for every step of the way.

I can understand and appreciate that attitude of mind, the offspring of the scientific age, which looks upon life as stern and cruel in its origin, bleak and harrowing in its progress, and dreadful in its close. It seems at times as if cruelty were king in all nature and in the lives of men. Pain is the price of so many steps along the way, and bloody are the footprints that we leave behind in sand or snow. It is not to be wondered at that some of us, in our perplexity and inability to

solve the riddles of an apparently cruel world, hide our heads like ostriches in the sand, refuse to believe in pain and evil and, with a sort of blind optimism, deny the existence of these things and try vainly to lift ourselves by our bootstraps above the shadows where these evils lie. Nor, on the other hand, is it strange that a sort of stoic pessimism should in more stalwart minds be the outgrowth of the cruelties of life. Stoicism and pessimism are not dead, but are very much alive in the civilization of our western world. The best expression of it in verse, the bravest and the frankest, is that of William Ernest Henley, the Shropshire poet, in his "Invictus," which concludes:

> "It matters not how strait the gate,
> How charged with punishments the scroll,
> I am the master of my fate,
> I am the captain of my soul."

Mr. Jack Barker, who was with me in British camps in 1917, singing to soldiers wounded, convalescent, or just about to go up into the lines, always sang that song and always changed the last two lines to run:

> "Christ is the master of my fate,
> Christ is the captain of my soul."

And I think that to men facing almost certain death or wounds, that change was justified. It lifted the poem out of a pagan philosophy, out of a defiant pessimism, into an atmosphere of Christian faith and courage. And I've seen it work in the faces of the men and have felt it thrilling in their handclasps. Cruel as was

their destiny, they were willing to bet their lives that there is a God. They believed in the White Comrade; some of them even told me that they saw Him. It is nothing to me that He was only a mirage, if He was; it is everything to me that He was an idea and ideal, the most real thing in this world, comforting and sustaining those men at Mons, at Paechendaele, on the Somme, at Verdun. It makes little difference whether He is an abstraction to men and women at this very hour, facing operations in hospitals, burning with fever in their beds, or standing by open graves where their little loved ones are being lowered into the dark. Idea or ideal or real person, it is all the same. He is at work in the world giving grit and endurance and hope to millions whose lives would otherwise be dark indeed. He is the same yesterday and today, and He will be forever.

I venture the assertion that Jesus is fitting into this age just as well as He fitted into the simpler pastoral air of Galilee and Judea; that as He entered through tent-flaps or beneath thatched roofs of mud huts, so He enters into marble halls of office buildings and hotels, apartment houses and palaces. He is preached today by commercial men, in the assembling places of trade, who perhaps never know, or at least seldom stop to reflect, that they are preaching Him and His ideals. Our very "service clubs," the most spectacular manifestation of business life, are named for one of His ideals, ministration. And suppose our intelligentsia are rather surfeited with the word "service," and sup-

pose they do turn up their noses in a kind of cynic sarcasm at this slogan of self-abnegation. It is only a passing pose of smartness. In their own homes and friendships, and even business relations, they practice it. In the language of Rabbi Harry Mayer, "May the time never come when we shall lose this brightest jewel from the diadem of faith." The ideal of Jesus, His statement that he who would be greatest among you must be servant of all, is entering into the very foundations of our commercial and industrial structures, and will one day, please God, enter into our international ones. Blink it, jeer it, sneer at it, as in our worldly wisdom we may do, there it comes, growing, working, like the yeast in the lump of dough, like the mustard seed growing into a great tree. It even hangs over our leading institutions of learning, for painted over the Wellesley chapel platform, and engraved in the great stone gate of Harvard, are these words of the greatest teacher of them all: *Non ministrari sed ministrare*, not to be ministered unto but to minister.

We are increasingly realizing, too, that even His economic principles are the best worldly wisdom. We forget how recent is our realization that honesty is the best policy; but Jesus goes as far beyond mere honesty as noontime is beyond the twilight of the dawn. He declares that the Golden Rule is the best policy in business as in all other human relations, and we are dimly beginning to understand how practical and hard-headed is His judgment. Nations are not yet ready for non-resistance, but of this much they are increasingly

conscious, that resistance is the road to ruin. Some day they will go the whole distance with Jesus, as China long ago did, and learn not to fight, if they want to live as nations for ten thousand or twenty thousand years. That He was an expert in economics the world of business—led by men like Edward A. Filene, Arthur Nash, William Hapgood, and, dimly, Henry Ford—is beginning to understand. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

His highest principle, that love is the best fulfilment of the self, we are also beginning gropingly to understand. His greatest follower harped upon that theme in music almost divine, and one of His latest followers has called love the greatest thing in the world. Few of us know it yet, and still fewer of us practice it; but His master key of love unlocks all doors in the labyrinth of life, straightens all paths, solves all puzzles. Love, deep and absorbing, for a person, for a cause, for a principle, for an ideal, is the solvent for all pain and anguish, weariness and heart hunger, disappointment and failure. One who loves anybody or anything with such passionate absorption can never despair of life, its meaning and its end. This is a high altitude, I know; it remains for humanity in the future to climb up where He is, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever.

The old dilemma, presented by John the Baptist to Jesus, is still the same: "Art thou he that should come? Or look we for another?" We come to Him today, consciously or unconsciously, with that same query.

Either He is the answer to the yearning, heart-broken cry of our souls, or else we must look to somebody else. I look around and see no other. On all the horizons of history there looms no other figure that can answer the hungry cry of my soul. Not in the east, with all its genius for religion, do I see one; not in the north, with its sagas and its demigods; certainly not in the west nor in the south is there a head lifted above the skyline. My heart with all its vagaries, with all its decayed spots, with all its fears and qualms, with all its terrors of the dark, calls out for someone to come and to help. I am incurably religious—and I speak for all humanity—and if He is not the one, then there is no one, and hope is dead. He *is* the one, the only one, and He shall be the burden of my song until "this poor lisping, stammering tongue lies silent in the grave": Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and forever.

## Is Jesus God?

*By* James I. Vance, D.D., first presbyterian church, nashville

*"In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God."*

—JOHN 1–1

WITH this verse as a text, I want to discuss the question: Is Jesus God? There is today no livelier nor acuter question than this in all the realm of religious thought and controversy, and there is not today nor at any other time a fact more fundamental to Christian faith or more essential to the existence of Christianity as a supernatural and authoritative religion than this of the Godhood of Jesus, Who in the prologue to John's Gospel is called "the Word."

### ATTACKS ON THE DEITY OF CHRIST

The deity of Jesus is a live question today because of the attacks made upon it. These attacks move along three lines.

The first moves in the direction of a bigger view of man. There are those who affirm that man is divine. All men are divine. Any man is divine. You are divine. It may surprise you to know it. You do not feel very divine, especially in some nasty humor or vile mood. You do not regard yourself as very much

of a god, especially when the Philistines make kindling wood of your plans. Yet there is a measure of truth in the statement that man is divine. He was made in God's image. He has divine potentialities and possibilities. By God's grace, he becomes a partaker of the divine nature. "We shall be satisfied when we awake in His likeness." But if Jesus was divine merely in the sense that you and I are divine, He was not God at all. He was merely a superman, and there is an infinite difference between a superman and God.

The second attack moves in the direction of a smaller view of Jesus. There are those who would explain away all the big things recorded of Christ. They pose as scientists, and proceed on the theory that a fact sensed by a flesh perception ranks ahead of one sensed by a spiritual perception. So they deny miracles, and regard the supernatural as a superstition. It is true they have not yet gotten through explaining, but they point to the victrola, the telephone, the wireless, to airships and the radio, and say: "Give us time!" Their position is that if they can explain away the miracles it will reduce Christ from a God to the measures of a man, a theory about which there may be a difference of opinion.

The third line of attack moves in the direction of an attenuated and diminished Deity. There are those who declare their belief in the deity of Christ and then proceed to tell us what they mean by deity. When they have finished, we discover that the thing they call

Godhood is so elusive and negative that it is not Godhood at all. One of this class says: "Yes, I believe that Jesus was God. God is just a word for good. The root meaning of good is the root meaning of God. Jesus was good. He was without sin. There was no element of evil in Him. His nature, therefore, being free from sin, was the God or the perfect good." It does not seem to occur to these people that their theory would make Adam very much of a god until he fell out of Eden. If Jesus was God merely in the sense that He was not guilty of actual sin, His Godhood is fragile, and the church would be wise to carry accident insurance.

These are the three lines along which attacks are being made today on the Godhood of Jesus—a bigger man, a smaller Christ, and a thinner deity.

### IF THESE ATTACKS SUCCEED

Suppose these attacks on the deity of Christ succeed and we surrender our faith that Jesus was God, what follows? We have lost our Bible. If Christ was merely a good man, the Bible is merely a good book. It is on a level with other literature. It has no more authority than Shakespeare's plays or Mr. H. G. Wells' Romantic History of the World. The glory of the Bible is not its age nor its style nor its historical value nor its literary beauty nor its moral grandeur, but the fact that on its pages we meet the sublimest Figure in human history. "In the volume of the book it is written of me." If Jesus shrivels from a God to a

mere man, you may as well send your Bible to a museum.

If Christ loses His deity we lose our Saviour, for if Christ be not God, He cannot forgive sin. He may be a great Teacher, but He is not a Saviour. A gentleman said to me one day: "I am going to join the Unitarian Church." I said: "Then you will have no Saviour, for if Jesus is not God, He cannot save us from our sins." "That is true," he said, "but I do not feel the need of a Saviour." "How then do you regard Jesus?" I asked him. "I regard Him as the noblest and wisest and best of men." "But this wisest and noblest and best of men says that you need a Saviour, and that He Himself is the only Saviour, that there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. If it be true that you do not need a Saviour, then He has deceived you and misled you and declared what is not true." Therefore if Jesus be not God, He is not even a good man.

If Christ's Godhood goes, we also lose our salvation. There can be no salvation without a Saviour. What we call salvation is merely a spasm of hysterics, a hypnotic mood, a piece of pious somnambulism. We may think our sins have been forgiven, and our natures changed, but it is merely a phase of auto-suggestion. If any change has been wrought, we have brought it about ourselves.

We also lose our heaven when Christ loses His Godhood. Whatever heaven is, it is the one bright spot on the far sky, our long home, where the weary journey

ends, where God wipes all tears from our eyes, where sorrow and trial and disappointment are forever behind us. But if Jesus was not God He did not rise from the dead. If Christ did not rise, neither do we. We rot in our graves forever. The dead are gone from us not to return. We have lost our loved ones. We may sing: "Lead, Kindly Light," and "Jerusalem, The Golden," but there are no answering realities to these great hymns of hope. Heaven is merely a castle in the air and the golden city a mirage. There is nothing ahead but blank, sterile night.

We also lose our heavenly Father, for Jesus is the only One Who has taken fear out of God's face. The heathen and pagan cults think of God as a terror. Their gods frighten them, but there on the cross Christ lifted His hands pierced by the nails and tore away the veil fear had woven over the face of God, and as we look we cry: "Abba Father!" Jesus said: "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father," but if He lied to us about Himself, He may have lied to us about the great Father, and there is no God left Who can comfort a weary heart or call a prodigal home from the far country.

These are some of the things involved in this question. When the fine phrase-makers of liberalism would spin their web of metaphysics and confuse us with speculative mist, it is well to keep in mind what is involved. If Christ be not God, we lose our Bible, our Saviour, our salvation, our heaven, and our heavenly Father. This is not a faith lightly to be surrendered.

Is there any good reason why it should be surrendered? I do not believe there is. Of course none cares to believe a lie. If Jesus is not God, there is no virtue in believing that He is, for there is no virtue in believing a lie. Superstition is without merit. Credulity has no power to save. But if Jesus is truly God, he who surrenders that faith for any reason, has swapped the universe for a toy balloon. I am not hunting for that kind of a trade.

### THE PROOF OF HIS DEITY

Was, then, Jesus God? Let us at once clear the way by saying that miracles are not the proof, whether they be the miracles of His ministry or of His Person. It may be as we go on that some day we shall discover the secret of the miracles and understand how Jesus in a perfectly natural way healed the blind, cured the lame and cleansed the lepers; but if we do, the discovery will not take from Him His Godhood; for He never based His claims on the signs He performed. Christ worked miracles to bless humanity, not to make a display of His power. As for the miracles of His Person, the virgin birth and the resurrection, it seems to me that Christ proves them far more than they Him.

The abstract argument for the Godhood of Jesus is brief, and from the standpoint of logic, unanswerable. Jesus was either God or He was not. If He was not God, He was either deceived about Himself or He deceived others about Himself. Was He deceived about Himself? Was He suffering from an hallucination?

Was He mentally unbalanced? Was He crazy? There is not the slightest evidence that He was. On the contrary, He had perfect poise. He was calm and self-contained, always in possession of Himself, sound and sane in every position that He took and in every judgment He formed. That alternative, then, must be rejected. On the other hand, did He deceive others about Himself? Was He a fraud? Was He an impostor? Did He live a lie? There has never been a life of such absolute sincerity. He was truth incarnate, and His influence on mankind has been to create integrity of character, to make men trustworthy and dependable, to establish confidence between man and his fellows. That alternative must also be rejected. We are thrown back, then, on the first proposition, from which there is no escape, namely, that Jesus is God.

This abstract argument, however, fails to satisfy us, for saving faith is not the result of a mental process but of a life experience. People discover that Jesus is God as they learn to know Him and try to live Him. This was His challenge, and His only challenge. "If any man will do my will, He shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak from myself." Let us turn, then, to some of the convictions that come as a result of a life experience.

I believe that Jesus was God on the testimony of the Bible. At an annual luncheon of the alumni of Union Theological Seminary in New York City, at which I was present as a guest, one of the speakers made this

statement: "The Bible nowhere says that Jesus is God." At the conclusion of the luncheon a venerable Presbyterian minister came forward to the speakers' table and said to Dr. Lyman Abbott: "In your address you declared that the Bible nowhere states that Jesus is God." "Yes," replied Dr. Abbott, "and I stand by what I said." "What will you do, then," asked this minister, "with the prologue to John's Gospel, which says, 'In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God, and the word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth'?" "O, that does not refer to Jesus," said Dr. Abbott. "To whom, then, does it refer?" he was asked. Then Dr. Abbott became a bit confused and said: "Have you read such-and-such a book?" When these gentlemen are asked questions they cannot answer, this is their method. They usually refer you to some book.

Of course the Bible says that Jesus is God, not only in the opening chapter of John's Gospel, but over and over again. If language can say a thing, John says that Jesus is God. There is also that wonderful passage in Philippians, where Paul declares that "Jesus, though being on an equality with God, thought not Godhood a thing to be striven after, but emptied himself, (or humbled himself)." This means that Christ did not use His divine power for Himself, but for others. If to this extent He emptied Himself of Godhood, He must have possessed Godhood to begin with.

One does not empty a vacuum. In the opening chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, Jesus is declared to be "the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His Person." The entire Gospel of St. John was written to prove the Godhood of Jesus. This is the writer's statement in the closing verse of the twentieth chapter, where he says: "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that, believing, ye might have life through His name."

There is only one way to get rid of the testimony of John's Gospel to the deity of Christ; that is to cut it out of the Bible. It is the method adopted by those who deny Christ's Godhood, but it is a poor argument that starts out to prove a thing by a certain document and begins by rejecting that part of the document which is unfavorable. Here is a witness—the Bible. It is clear and credible. I will match that book against all the guesses of the scientists who deny Christ's deity.

I believe that Jesus is God because He lived like a God. If He were merely a man, why is it that other men do not live as He did? We have His teachings. Why is it we do not faithfully practice them? We have this ideal of a perfect life, but we fall far short of realizing the ideal. When I was preaching to the soldiers overseas, a Jewish rabbi came to the camp to speak to the Jewish soldiers. Among these Jewish lads was one who attended a number of times the Protestant services. He asked the rabbi to tell him the difference between the Messiah of the Jews and the Jesus of the

Christians. The rabbi said: "The difference is that we Jews believe that the Messiah is still to come, whereas Christians believe that He has already come in the Person of Jesus." After a moment's meditation the young soldier said: "But, rabbi, when our Messiah comes, what will He have on Jesus?" Christ lived the perfect life, the kind of life God would be expected to live were He to become man. Who can suggest a single change that should be made in Christ's life to conform to this perfect ideal? He realized the ideal; because He lived like a God, it is not hard to believe that He was God.

I believe that Jesus is God because He died like a God. One day in the pioneer period of our country, a great statesman hitched his horse in front of a country church in the valley of Virginia and went inside. He was a stranger to the community. The congregation was composed largely of the farmers and their families from the neighborhood. In the pulpit was a blind preacher. As the statesman listened, he was spellbound. The blind preacher was painting a picture of Calvary, of the trial and crucifixion of Jesus. He described the arrest, Christ's bearing before Pilate and the priests. He went on to speak of the actual scene on Calvary. He dwelt on the words that fell from Christ's lips as He hung on the cross, on the sublime moment when Jesus said to His Father: "Into thy hands I commit my spirit!" At the climax of this eloquent picture, the blind preacher in a voice that thrilled his audience exclaimed: "Socrates died like a

philosopher, but Jesus Christ died like a God!" If there were nothing but that day on Calvary, it would be enough for me. There was something unearthly, heavenly, about Jesus. To Him, death was not defeat, but achievement. He did not suffer death. He accomplished His decease, for He was God.

I believe in the Godhood of Jesus because of His humanity. It was real. He possessed divine power, but He never used it for Himself. He could make bread out of stones, but He never changed a stone into a loaf to feed His own hunger. He was thirsty and tired as He sat by Jacob's well, but He was so human that He said to a sinning woman who had come to draw water from the well: "Give me to drink."

Christ's name for Himself was "Son of man." This expression occurs more than sixty times in the New Testament. In every case with two or three exceptions it comes to us over the lips of Jesus Himself. He took this name not because He had any doubt of His deity, but probably because He would emphasize to us the fact of His humanity. It is a little man who is jealous for his titles and attributes. A big man can get along with a plain name. And so Christ took a plain name, the Son of man, because He was a real God. It was His humanity that is stressed in that significant passage where Christ asked His apostles: "Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" Peter answered: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God!" He seems to say: "Thou art so much the Son of man, so human, Thy humanity is so big, so capacious, so racial,

so all-inclusive, that Thou art more than Son of man, Thou art the Son of God."

It is difficult to know where the human ends and the divine begins. They probably blend. But the greater always includes the less. Here in Christ's humanity there is such a glory about the less that it becomes easy to believe in the greater. As we become acquainted with Jesus, we find it easy to believe that He is God. It is this humanness that we long for in God.

> " 'Tis the weakness in strength that I cry for,
> My flesh that I seek in the Godhead,
> I seek and I find it, O Saul,
> It shall be a Face like this face that receives thee,
> A Man like to me thou shalt love
> And be loved by forever, a Hand like this hand
> Shall throw open the gates of the new life to thee!
> See the Christ stand!"

I believe in the Godhood of Jesus because of what He claims to do. There are those striking passages, such as: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," and "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you!" What amazing presumption in any but a God to make such statements as these! But I refer especially to those passages in which He claims to forgive sin, a thing which only God can do. He proved His ability to do it by wiping out the penalty. His enemies charged Him with blasphemy because He claimed to forgive sin and thus made Himself equal with God. But He

replied: "Which is easier, to say, 'Thy sins be forgiven thee,' or 'Arise, take up thy bed and walk'?" That is: Which is easier, to forgive sin or to blot out its penalty? Then to prove that He had the power to forgive it, He blotted out the penalty of the man's sin, and the paralytic stood before them whole. It was for this that they killed Him. He made Himself equal with God. He could easily have denied it, but He let the charge stand. He could not deny Himself. And so they crucified Him because He claimed to be God, and they were too blind to see the proof He offered to support His claim.

Again, I believe that Jesus is God because of what He does. One could believe in Him because of what He did, because of His ministry to stricken human nature during those years when He was here upon earth in the flesh. But we need not go back into the past. The people who assail the deity of Christ might be disposed to challenge the record again. Therefore let us take His work today. "The Son of man has power on earth to forgive sin." The greatest miracle Christ ever performed He is daily performing. It is the miracle of raising, not a dead body, but a dead soul, of putting broken-down character on its feet again, of making the sinner a partaker of the divine nature. This miraculous ministry of Christ passes before our eyes daily. What He is doing today demonstrates His Godhood.

I believe in the deity of Jesus because of Christ's influence on the world. You cannot explain the early apostolic church if Jesus were a mere man. Before

His crucifixion, His disciples were timid, vacillating, cowardly. At the arrest they all forsook Him and fled. Then came that sudden change when nothing could daunt or deter them from their work, when they welcomed trial, persecution, martyrdom. What wrought this marvelous change? Christ had come back from the dead, and they knew beyond the peradventure of a doubt that their Master was God.

The rapid spread of Christianity during the first three centuries bears a similar testimony. There has been nothing like it in human history. We need to go back and read over again the story of those days. The faith of Jesus swept the world. So widespread was the acceptance of Christ that when the Roman emperor ordered the death of the Christians in a certain section of his army, he was told that to carry out the command would be to destroy the army.

The effect of Christ's influence on the world has been too big, too far-reaching, for a mere man to have produced it. It is going on upon an ever-increasing scale. There is no power that can stop it. Jesus is the Hero of the world today. He is the conquering Christ.

Added to all else is the experience of millions who can say with Paul: "I know whom I have believed!" One may not understand the dogma of the deity of Christ or the virgin birth or the resurrection, but he knows that only God can save, that it takes divine power to regenerate a soul. When one can say: "I know that I am saved," he has an argument for the

Godhood of his Saviour which nothing can challenge. He can more easily doubt himself.

### THE BURDEN OF PROOF ON THOSE WHO DENY

Because of all this, and of other things that might be mentioned, we can go back to the prologue of John's Gospel with renewed confidence. Is Jesus God? It is a question to be answered with a great affirmative. The burden of proof is not on those who affirm, but on those who deny the Godhood of Christ. They can never prove their denial, not only because it is impossible to prove a negative, but because the positive proof of Christ's Godhood is unanswerable. What folly to try to build a sect around a negation! Even the devils believe and tremble.

Should Christ go, who would take His place? There is no substitute. There are many religious leaders and teachers. There is only one Saviour, of Whom we may say with Peter: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God!"

It is not a smaller Christ the world needs today. It is a Christ bigger than all the creeds, bigger than all the churches. Christ is all of that. We have not yet explored His Personality. There are reserves in Him we have not touched. There are margins of power and sympathy and leadership awaiting the call of world conditions yet to be developed. We may rest assured

that as for the past, so for the future, this tall Figure on the world's skyline will suffice for race leadership.

Nevertheless, we must keep in mind that Christ does not shut out of His fellowship those who have but a partial view of what He is and of what He would do for them. Christ offers to men not a dogma, but Himself. As He is received and followed and experienced, doubts dissolve, and Christ discovers Himself to His followers. It is possible to have intellectual difficulties about many questions connected with Christ, and at the same time exercise saving faith in Him, for it is not with the head, but with the heart, that man believeth unto righteousness. It is one thing to deny the deity of Christ. It is another, and a very different thing, to want to believe it but to find oneself hampered with honest intellectual difficulties. Thus hampered, one may receive Christ for all that He is and for all that He would do for him, and as Christian experience unfolds, find faith taking the place of doubt.

If one can do no better, he can at least do this. He can give Christ the benefit of his doubts. It were far better to believe in Jesus as God and be troubled with doubt, than not to believe in Jesus at all. "Give us your faiths," said Goethe, "as for doubts, we have quite enough of our own." Let us say with Richard Watson Gilder:

"If Jesus Christ is a man
And only a man, I say

That of all mankind I will cleave to Him,
And to Him will I cleave alway.

But if Jesus Christ is a God,
And the only God, I swear
I will follow Him through heaven and hell,
Through earth, the sea, and the air."

## The Greatest Story Ever Told

*By* Rt. Rev. James E. Freeman, D.D., bishop of Washington

*"All they that heard it wondered."*
—St. Luke II – 18 (part)

WE CATCH freshened enthusiasm and renewed inspiration from the old but ever new story of the birth of Christ. Somehow, there is that in all the incidents of this blessed and wondrous event that touches with greater power our deeper emotions, and calls forth from us the better and nobler impulses of our nature. Possibly no writer has made this more evident than Charles Dickens in his immortal "Christmas Carol." The awakening of the latent and dormant nature of the selfish and repellant Scrooge, the almost miraculous change wrought in him through the joyous and hopeful appeal of the season that speaks of childhood and youth and of all those sacred associations that find their noblest expression in the things of the home, illustrate in a striking way the deeper meaning and purpose of the events that constitute the story of the birth of Christ in Bethlehem's stable. No single incident recorded in human history has so gripped the imagination or compelled the reverent awe of men the world over as this wholly picturesque and

utterly homely scene. It is not surprising that when the shepherds on the hillsides of Judea told their story, "all they that heard it wondered." From that day to this latest hour, in spite of all the strivings and contentions of men, the believers and unbelievers, the faithful and the unfaithful, men have said as these anniversaries of the birth of Christ recur: "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass." No far-famed capital, no great world center of learning, no gallery that houses the choicest of the master arts, so focuses and holds the vision of men as the obscure village in which Christ was born. No matter what our individual judgments may be, no matter what influences may conspire to separate and segregate us into groups and classes, yes, no matter what our creeds may state or may not state, the influence that proceeds from the holy incidents that mark the birth of Christ makes all hearts coalesce, gives to life a new meaning, inspires it with a higher purpose and compels it to deeds of nobler service.

There are some things that, as Tennyson says, "lie too deep for sound or foam." We try in vain to express them in language, forms and symbols, but they are too elusive, too utterly splendid, too far beyond our powers of expression. They appeal to the imagination, they cause deep reflection, they call into action desires and impulses that give to life a new interpretation and sanctity. The birth of Christ, His wonderful ministry, His incomparable teachings, His supreme sacrifice on Calvary, His resurrection from the tomb, what

language may we command to express our thought or our devotion concerning Him? There come to us in the course of life's struggles and complexities, its joys and its sorrows, hours when we feel the compulsions of these sacred incidents that overwhelm us with wonder and draw from us expressions of our highest adoration and devotion. It is amazing and well nigh incomprehensible how this irresistible power of Christ persists. Not all the machinations of men, not all the oppositions of those who would resist the impulses of divine love, not all the clamor and strife of tongues, not all the wars and rumors of wars, can stay the power or influence that proceeds from Him who was born on Christmas Day. If it be true that the great epochs in human history have been marked by the rise of outstanding personalities, if now and again a single individual has been the means of ushering in a new era of human achievement, how transient and ephemeral seem their accomplishments when contrasted with that which is witnessed in the person of Jesus Christ.

The world as we know it today, is passing through a period of tragic happenings such as it has never known before. The pathway over which our feet are passing is strewn with wrecks, wrought by the hot temper and havoc of war. Institutions that through the centuries we have builded have suffered shock and misfortune, and the very foundations themselves seem for the while at least to be shaken. Truly,

"Our little systems have their day,
They have their day and cease to be."

Even the currents of our thought have suffered change and our genius for leadership in every department of life has experienced a seeming suspension. We repair to our laboratories and classrooms, our halls of legislation and our places of concourse seeking for light and direction. We cry "peace, peace, and there is no peace." We turn to our sources of knowledge and experience and they avail us nothing. In the midst of all this turmoil and confusion, with men's hearts failing them for fear, there are conspicuous evidences that the world is turning with greater assurance and more definite conviction to the supreme Master whose birth was marked by obscurity and lowliness. Already the hopeful are beginning to see on the horizons the dawn of a better day. Already there is made evident the influence that softens the hardened and apostate, that renders tender and responsive the impenitent and sinning, that lights with a new sense of hope and expectation the lives of those who have been shadowed and darkened by sorrow or misfortune, and that fills with inspiration those who are looking forward to the realization of the ideals of a universal brotherhood.

At such a time as this we dare not come to men with our fanciful theories and conjectures. The multitude is at our gates, insistently demanding, "Sirs, we would see Jesus." A tired and disillusioned world is a-weary of all our speculations and negations. He was right

who said, "Let our prophet come with a new mandate for the soul upon his lips and the people will hear him gladly."

Today in the midst of a disordered and distracted world there is no reasonable ground for theological controversy. Now as never before the insistent demand is for a Church that can present with unfailing fidelity the supreme Saviour of men, without obscuring or rendering uncertain or ambiguous His mighty teachings. The yearning of men for a vision of the uplifted and risen Saviour has never been greater than now. Anything and everything that tends to draw the vision of men away from Him, menaces the security of His Church and retards the happiness and peace of the world. In the midst of a condition that literally imperils our Christian civilization there is no room for the controversialist, no time for the discussion of those questions that tend to strife and division. To increase bitterness or party rivalry at such a critical time as the present when unity of action is indispensable to the securing of the most sacred interests of life, is folly, and can issue in nothing but disorder and confusion worse confounded. The great body of the laity, of every class, are calling for a faith expressed in simple terms that will serve to stabilize, refresh and inspire them in the midst of the world's confusions and distractions. Whether they can comprehend the formulæ of the Church or not, they expect to find at the heart of all our Church systems the central and supreme figure of Christ. They have come to believe, even in the

face of controversy and conflicting opinions, that in Christ alone and His teachings are to be found the cure for the ills that are causing the distresses and disorders of men and nations. To revive at such a time discussion concerning the niceties of creedal expression means to obscure His life and to seriously embarrass the one agency that is designed to bring order out of confusion. To proclaim to men the fact that "there is none other name under Heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved," is the immediate and supreme business of every man who has assumed the office of the sacred ministry. If we have magnified the agency or the method more than the Christ, if we have permitted conceits of learning or insular habits of thought to take the place of a consistently preached and exemplified Gospel, then let us with chastened spirits undertake to restore our sacred office to that function to which at our ordination we solemnly obligated ourselves. Loyalty to the major things is imperatively demanded at this time.

Reasonable latitude in interpretation, where sanctified discipline is exercised, has never been denied to either the clergy or the laity, it is not denied them today; but liberty in the large matter of interpretation does not mean license. Loyalty to the central facts of our common faith as we hold them in the Apostles' Creed, is imperatively demanded in a body that would challenge the respect and devotion of those who constitute its constituency. It is not the disputant or the controversialist who has given to men either

the vision or the inspiration indispensable to life, but the consecrated prophet flaming with a passion for souls. We have differed in matters that concern the administration and relative importance of the Church's offices; we have in spite of these differences maintained our solidarity and unity as a Church. Shall we at such a time as the present, when broader and greater opportunities are at hand, disclose an internal condition that speaks of division, discord, suspicion and a tragic lack of Christian forbearance? The multitudes wait for the dispensed bread of life; shall we give them stones?

The call for the prophet, the prophet who has been with Jesus and learned of Him, is insistent and urgent; shall the prophet come to his people with the discussions and controversies of the classroom, thinking the while that these can refresh and renew a jaded and sin-sick world? Where a vital and vitalizing faith is being preached, where men are purveying that which nourishes and renews, there the spent spiritual forces are renewed and the Saviour once again becomes regnant among men. Let us silence the voice of criticism and controversy, let us find our unity in Him whom we are pledged to serve, let us remember the needs, the indispensable needs of those to whom we are called to minister, let us put away from us all malice and in the broad spirit of Christian charity be generous to one another's frailties. A challenging Christ is on the broad highways today seeking for the wandering and the lost; shall we not with renewed

fidelity now join Him in the great quest, and in more stable times when men's judgments are stronger and their tempers less feverish, give ourselves to those questions that in the light of a clearer vision and better understanding call for calm consideration and dispassionate judgment? If loyalty to Him and His Church in this critical hour is the supreme need, may it be our high privilege to subordinate our wills and purposes to His sovereign will, that the transcendent claims of His kingdom may be made evident to the children of men.

His voice is calling us today and its message is: "One is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." Let us seek for faith and order within our own household; let our only rivalry be, who best can serve Him, and serving Him we shall set forward the large concerns of His kingdom.

The near approach of the blessed and joyous season of Christmas brings once again before our vision the story of the birth of Christ. It is inwrought in the dearest and finest things we treasure in life. It has furnished the inspiration of art, of poetry and of the nobler and truer things of domestic life. Through the long centuries, in the face of apostasy and sin and the horrors of war itself, men have been saying one to another, "let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass." Wondering as they believed its story, too deep for the mind of man to fathom, trying as they might through the medium of language to phrase their faith concerning it, their love of the circumstances attending the advent of Jesus

Christ has impelled them to offer their gifts and to realize anew the meaning of the ancient prophecy, "a little child shall lead them." Here at Bethlehem, understanding gives way to the sublime things of faith, and reverence takes the place of curiosity. The beauty of it commands the devotion of the careless and the indifferent alike. The learned and ignorant, the rich and the poor, the light-hearted and the sad, find in this incident that which compels their love, quickens their thought and satisfies their deepest aspirations. The very mystery of it all enhances its significance and renders it the most compelling and fascinating incident in human history. Our explanations of its meaning are unsatisfying, our theories concerning it divest it of its most appealing aspects; even the brush of Raphael falters as it attempts to give it its setting and beauty on canvas. Sublime in its simplicity, rich in its significance, unfathomable in its mystery, it stands as the witness of a love that is beyond our powers to adequately comprehend.

Once again a tired world turns to behold the Christchild. Once again we lay aside all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking, with all malice, and in the spirit of true fraternity and the deepened consciousness of our common need, pay homage to Him who for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. How poor and mean seems all our piled up national wealth, our proud intellectual conceits, our speculations and negations, in the presence of this mighty mystery which

this anniversary of the birth of Christ proclaims. What need, what tragic need there is today that we should with England's great laureate say:

> "Our wills are ours, we know not why,
> Our wills are ours, to make them thine."

Away from our strifes and discords, away from our selfishness and ignoble rivalries and competitions, away from everything that is petty and mean and unworthy of our better natures, He is calling us today. There is that within us which cannot find satisfaction apart from Him. There are the unsolved problems, the bitter disappointments, the broken fellowships, the domestic tragedies, the enervating sorrows, the body and soul destroying sins to be overcome and mollified and healed. "Lord, to whom shall we go?" Express it in what terms we will there is a language of the heart that the lips may not articulate that responds to the spirit of Him who was born on Christmas Day. Motherhood, the most sacred of all human relationships finds its apotheosis in the annal of the Bethlehem story. Blessed indeed among women, is the mother of Jesus. To her the world reverently turns as the greatest among women. Mary, mother of Christ, what sacred associations group themselves about her blessed person! Corregio, Raphael, Murillo, yes, all the highest exponents of art come to this Bethlehem scene for inspiration, and from it derive the noblest and finest expressions of their genius. Motherhood and childhood, what sublime and holy thoughts these awaken

in the human breast. Even the embittering and hardening influences of the world that dull and chill the emotions, are softened and subdued as they feel the spell of this holy environment. Shall we not fervently hope that once again this old world, with all its distractions and sorrows and sins, shall find its heart softened and its impulses ennobled, as with renewed reverence and devotion it turns to behold the blessed mother and child of Bethlehem? What care we for all the confusions and disputes of those who would seek to subtract from our belief concerning these holy incidents that which makes the story of Bethlehem altogether the most compelling and fascinating, yes the most rejuvenating and inspiring of all recorded annals? As we consider our unworthiness we stand abashed before mother and child. We have no language adequate to express our reverence and devotion. Only angel choirs are fit to sing His advent song, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace to men of good will." Our petty systems, our conceits of learning, our most august ceremonial pale into insignificance before the holy scene of Bethlehem. We return to it today with renewed ardor, with quickened emotions, with reverent awe. While it baffles and embarrasses us, it challenges and silences all our speculations and negations, it touches the deeper and truer things of our nature, it lights up with divine radiance the meaning of life's most sacred relationships; it makes the high purposes of God more evident to us, yes, it is Emmanuel—'God *with* us,' the fullest ap-

proximation of all that the human mind is capable of comprehending of divinity.

"How silently, how silently,
The wondrous gift is given,
So God imparts to human hearts
The Blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still,
The dear Christ enters in.

O holy child of Bethlehem!
Descend to us, we pray;
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us to-day.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell;
Oh come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel!"

## Incontestable Fact and Indispensable Truth

*By* Bishop Warren A. Candler, methodist episcopal church, south

*"If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain."*

—I CORINTHIANS XV – 14

CHRISTIANITY is pre-eminently a religion of fact; its source is not mythical and its nature is not speculative.

It arose in historic events, advance in the enlightened period which followed the "Augustan Age" of Roma nliterature, and moved under the focalized light of Roman law, Grecian philosophy and Jewish religion. "For this thing was not done in a corner" (Acts 26: 26).

The supreme fact of this factual faith is that of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

It is the only miracle that is indispensable to Christianity. We are assured that "many other signs" He "truly did" which are not recorded (John 20: 30 and 21: 25). Indeed, less than two score of the miraculous deeds wrought by Him are mentioned in the four Gospels. But myriads of miracles would not avail to establish His claims to divine authority, if He did not rise from the dead. If He did thus rise, the fact is sufficient to support the weight of all other miracles

attributed to Him and to prove that He is "the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness" (Romans 1:4).

Jesus Himself emphasized His resurrection above all other signs as the full and final evidence of His divine character and heavenly mission.

Early in His public ministry, He "went up to Jerusalem," and while there He drove from the Temple, the traders and money-changers who were defiling the holy place with their corrupting commercialism; and when it was said to Him, "What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing thou doest these things?" he answered, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up," accompanying His answer doubtless with a gesture toward His body which made plain His meaning. The author of the Fourth Gospel says, "He spake of the temple of his body" (John 2:21); and evidently His questioners so understood Him, for after His crucifixion representatives of the same party said to Pilate, "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night and steal him away, and say unto the people He is risen from the dead: so that the last error shall be worse than the first" (Matthew 27:63 and 64).

At a later date, when again a sign was demanded of Him, he responded with these burning words, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of

the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matthew 12: 38-40).

It is not strange that our Lord rested His claims to saving power and regal authority upon the fact of His resurrection. It was essential to His Messiahship as the Incarnate Son of God. As such He was bound to die and bound to rise again. Otherwise He could not fulfill "the hope of Israel" nor accomplish the redemption of mankind from sin and death. His resurrection, therefore, was inevitable, "because it was not possible that He should be holden of death" (Acts 2: 24). Hence His great and weighty words to His disciples: "Thus it is written and thus it *behooved* the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things" (Luke 24: 46-48). The culmination of His Messiahship was in His resurrection and the essence of the commission given by Him to His Apostles was witnessing to the transcendent fact.

Paul, therefore, was affirming no more than Jesus had taught, when writing to the Church at Corinth he declared, "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain."

In this noble Epistle, which is one of four the Pauline authorship of which the most radical of the critics admit is "undisputed and indisputable," the great

Apostle affirms that the fact of the resurrection is axiomatic in the Christian system and indispensable to it, Christian faith being both vacuous and futile without it. He assumes that no party in the factious Church at Corinth will deny it, whatever else might be the subject of doubt or debate among them. To it he appeals as a matter settled beyond all question and as a certainty by all Christians however divergent their views on other subjects might be. He avers most emphatically and solemnly that it was the source and support of the faith of the Corinthians and the central truth in the Apostolic preaching by which they had been brought to Christ and won to Christianity: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures" (I Corinthians 15:1-4). He thus affirms that the saving gospel which he had preached to them, and which they had joyously received at the first was a sacred deposit, "*delivered*" to him and by him—*not discovered*—of the revealed truths of Christ's atoning death and resurrection. These facts he proclaims, not as fanciful theories or sterile speculations, but as indispensable elements of their holy religion, deeply embedded in age-long Scriptures, the staple truths of

Apostolic preaching, and the very essence of the faith of all who might justly profess and call themselves Christians. On a factual foundation he rested the Gospel that he preached, and he made the fact of Christ's resurrection its corner stone. And such, indeed, it is to any true and real Gospel that is worthy of the name.

Corinth has been justly characterized as "the Vanity Fair of the Roman Empire," and into the gay city all the currents of a foul, but alluring, paganism flowed. Thither ran floods of commerce, waves of politics, and streams of philosophy, which mingled in a turbid tide that bore on its bosom peculiar perils to both the faith and practice of the Church among the Corinthians. Not the least of the influences which ill-affected the creed and conduct of the Christians in Corinth was a subtle and popular philosophy of a materialistic nature which had penetrated the minds of a considerable number among them. Like many modish-minded disciples of Christ in all times and places they were more eager to conform their faith to prevalent speculations than to bring "into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (II Corinthians 10:5). Hence they scouted the idea of the resurrection of the dead as a conception which was both unbelievable and undesirable. They did not, however, propose on that account to renounce Christianity flatly and unequivocally. They would cling to the name though they would modify its nature. They considered it a system, like other philosophies,

which they were free and competent to review and revise and adapt as they saw fit. From it they would eliminate whatever seemed to them might be unreasonable and unwelcome to the carnal mind and retain such elements only as they esteemed to be essential and credible. They would cling to the simple story of Christ's life in the flesh and would cast aside as worse than worthless any legendary additions which according to the science of their day were incredible statements of impossible events.

They were quite ready to believe that Christ's life on the earth was most beautiful and most worthy to be followed as an example of lofty living. They were willing to confess that He propounded in the Sermon on the Mount a heavenly doctrine of morality, and that on Calvary He died heroically though shamefully. But whatever Paul and others might mean by affirming that He rose from the dead these rationalists at Corinth would not believe for a moment that His rising was such a bodily resurrection as contravened their dogma that "there is no resurrection." On that speculative pre-supposition they proposed to dismiss any thought or theory of the resurrection as unimportant and unessential, if not untrue.

Perhaps they accounted themselves somewhat superior in intelligence to the Apostles and the average Christian because they possessed broader minds, had acquired greater learning, were more progressive, more tolerant, and more hospitable in thought, without being less devoted to Christian morality or less observant of

religious duty. It may be that they indulged the self-complacent notion that they were more sweet-spirited and more devout because they rejected unintelligible tenets which Paul and the majority of their fellow Christians held far too tenaciously and without just respect for "freedom of thought."

But Paul would have nothing of their limp and listless liberalism. Accordingly he gave them plainly to understand that to ignore, minify, explain away, or deny the resurrection of Christ is to renounce Christianity altogether, that it is to deal the Christian faith a death blow at its heart, and is not merely to maim one of its members, which may be more or less comely and useful, but not essential to its life. And such, indeed, is the case, if the words of Jesus can be believed, and the saving Gospel, proclaimed by the Apostles and received by the primitive Church, can be accepted.

It is too plain for serious discussion that to deny the fact of Christ's resurrection, or to explain it away by any speculative theory which robs it of its resurrective nature and makes it a transmigration of His soul into a phantom form, destitute of His essential and perfected humanity, is to renounce historic Christianity altogether. A Christ who did not rise from the tomb in which the Crucified One was buried is not the Christ revealed in the New Testament. Such a Christ has nothing in common with Him "whom the glorious company of the Apostles, the goodly fellowship of the Prophets, and the noble army of the

Martyrs praise; whom the Holy Church throughout the world doth acknowledge; who is the King of glory, the Everlasting Son of the Father."

The Christian Church owes its birth and its continued life to the Christ who "did truly rise again from the dead, and took again His body, with all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature wherewith He ascended into heaven, and there sitteth until He return to judge all men at the last day." Its vitalizing faith in its Risen Lord does not rest on a cunningly devised fable, nor spring from delusive hallucinations, nor arise from mythical legends. By neither falsehood, fanaticism, nor fancy was Christianity created. A real and risen Christ created it; and the fact of His resurrection is central to its tenets, vital to its life, and inseparable from its history. For its belief in this great fact the Church has been, and is, always ready "to give an answer to every man that asketh a reason of the hope that is in it" (I Peter 3:15); for no fact in all human history is better attested.

Let us consider briefly a small part of the evidence by which it is established. (1) *There is the positive and unequivocal testimony of competent and credible witnesses in proof of it.*

(a) The men whose witnessing to it is set out in the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles had perfect opportunity to know the fact to which they testified; and such personal knowledge was an indispensable requisite to their Apostleship. So said St. Peter when

he proposed the choosing of one to succeed Judas, who by transgression fell: "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning with the baptism of John, unto the same day that He was taken up from among us, *must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection*" (Acts 1:21 and 22).

(b) They were not credulous and superstitious men, ready to believe anything however preposterous. It is recorded by them that their Master chided them for their slowness to believe what was foreshown by the Scriptures and fulfilled by His resurrection (Luke 24:24 and 25 and John 20:24-29). At the first sight of Him which some of them had of Him after His resurrection they were filled with fear and misapprehension. "Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet" (Luke 24:36-40).

(c) They were not men of bad character, whose vices discredited them; but they were men against whose moral life no impeachment was ever brought.

(d) They had no motive to deceive. They could

gain nothing by preaching that Jesus had risen, if what they said was false. On the contrary, they lost everything, some losing life itself, for declaring the fact of the resurrection. It was their dying for the truth which so changed the meaning of the Greek word "*martus*" which signified "a witness," until it came to mean "a martyr" witnessing by his death.

(e) Whatever may be the real, or fancied, discrepancies in the several accounts which are given of the resurrection, however the narratives may vary in minor details, they all agree unanimously that the transcendent event really and truly took place; and the writers of the Gospels had no disagreements about it while they continued to live and labor together. Apparent discrepancies exclude the possibility of collusion upon the part of the witnesses, but they do not involve contradictions among them.

Moreover, when Paul wrote his first Epistle to the Church at Corinth there were still living a majority of "five hundred brethren" (above two hundred and fifty) who together on one occasion had seen the risen Lord, and confirmed the testimony of Peter, James, John, and all the other Apostles.

(f) It is idle to attempt to explain away all this testimony on any theory of "hallucinations" or "visions." The same delusion does not begin to possess so many persons at the same time and leave them all the same day.

(2) *Furthermore, the testimony of the evangelists*

*is corroborated by the circumstances surrounding the event.*

Jesus was crucified at the time of the Passover, the greatest feast of the Jews, which drew thousands to Jerusalem, where He was tried and executed. His trial and crucifixion by the civil authorities at the instigation of the Jewish Sanhedrin made it a subject of intense interest to all the inhabitants of the city and to all the visitors at the Feast. His ministry of preaching and healing had excited the nation for many months, and He had entered the city shortly before His trial amid the hosannas of a great multitude. He had predicted His rising from the dead, and His prediction was known to His enemies, who took the most careful precautions against any story of its fulfilment being believed. Accordingly, He was buried, the sepulchre was sealed with the seal of the Roman procurator, and a centurion's guard of a hundred men was stationed by it to watch it. Now, with the body of Jesus thus entombed and guarded, one of three things must have taken place, *viz:*

(a) His body lay in the grave and dissolved as do all dead bodies; (b) or, it was stolen away; (c) or He rose from the dead. There is no other alternative conceivable.

Did it continue in the sepulchre and return to dust? Why, then, did not the foes of Christ and their followers produce the body and thus summarily end the mischievous superstition about a resurrection which in less than a week began to be proclaimed? With His

lifeless body thus exhibited His disciples would have been dispersed beyond the possibility of their rallying again for the promotion of His cause.

Was the body stolen away? How could any one, whether friend or foe, have perpetrated the theft without detection, at the time of the Passover, when the full moon in the Syrian sky made the night almost as bright as day, and when the eyes of thousands were fixed on the tomb in the garden around which a company of Roman soldiers kept watch? But, if, despite these conditions, it was stolen, who committed the theft? His enemies? Why did they not produce it? If they had it, they had every motive to produce it and no possible reason for not bringing it forth.

Did His disciples steal it? If so, how did they elude the guard? By bribery? For that they were too poor. By force? For that they were too timid and too powerless.

If they secured it by bribery or by force, why were they never indicted, convicted, and executed for the offense, as most assuredly they would have been if guilt could have been fixed upon them?

Again, if His followers had on their hands the mangled, lifeless and decaying body of Jesus, whence came their newly-found faith, which was so confident, and their restored courage which was so fearless? Whence their death-defying zeal, by which they were able to establish so rapidly and firmly large churches at Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth, Ephesus, in the cities of Gala-

tia and Macedonia, and ultimately at Rome, the distant capital of the empire?

Could a conscious and corrupt fraud so revive hope, quicken courage, and elevate moral character? Could a delusion so enthrall and empower men of their type, or captivate men of any type? Did a hallucination ever so stimulate faith, purify lives, and conquer the world?

The facts of the case admit of but one explanation. The positive testimony of upright men, corroborated most perfectly by circumstantial evidence, proves conclusively that Jesus rose from the dead.

(3) *The witness of St. Paul in his undisputed Epistles, and especially in his first letter to the Corinthians, adds cumulative force to the proof supplied by the four evangelists.*

These Epistles show that their author, within a very few years after the crucifixion of Jesus, had been converted to Christianity and changed from a cruel persecutor of the Christians to a zealous propagandist of their religion. They reveal that both he and those to whom they were addressed believed most firmly in the fact of the resurrection and considered that fact as the very foundation of the faith which they professed.

They show further that this belief in the risen Jesus was prevalent in churches as widely separated as those of Galatia, Corinth, and Rome, and that men of all parties and shades of opinion, however they might differ with respect to other matters, accepted

the resurrection of Jesus as a fact about which there could be no disputing among them.

From these four Epistles it is clear beyond all reasonable doubt that within a very brief space after the crucifixion the Christian Church arose on the sole foundation of the confident belief that its crucified Messiah had been raised from the dead, and that it achieved speedily the greatest advancement throughout the Roman Empire.

What can explain these incontrovertible facts, if Jesus did not rise from the dead? Did a delusion detach Saul of Tarsus, the persecuting Pharisee, from the school of Gamaliel and bind him in deathless devotion to Jesus of Nazareth? Did the delusion which deceived him spread as an evil distemper throughout all the widely scattered churches which he founded, yielding wherever it went a new and nobler type of life in all who were affected by it? If so, what a blessed hallucination it must have been!

The miraculous birth of the Christian Church through the proclamation of the fact of Christ's resurrection, is scarcely more marvellous than the social effects which soon followed throughout the Roman Empire and the moral consequences which have continued until the present day.

At the beginning of the first century of the Christian era, the wearied and hopeless world was sinking helplessly into utter chaos and despairing ruin. But a new era dawned as the propagators of the Gospel went forth everywhere preaching "Jesus and the resur-

rection" (Acts 17: 18). Amid the desolations of the dying civilizations of that age a new force began to operate which renovated the nations that yielded to its influence and rescued them from anarchy and destruction. A power of progress was released which has never ceased to persist. From that time until now, sustained advancement has been found only among the peoples who have most nearly followed the Risen Christ. Wherever this faith is found elevation of life and energy of enterprise are seen; and where it is not, inferiority and stagnation prevail. This correspondence of cause and effect cannot be accidental. A careful and candid consideration of the past history and present condition of the human race leads logically to the conclusion that the Christian religion is the source of vitality from which the foremost nations have, and must, draw their life and vigor. If such is the case, it is the mightiest power for the regeneration of mankind that the world has ever known. Indeed, it is not too much to say that it has saved the world in the past and is the only saving power for the future. If its force were now withdrawn from the earth, the twentieth century would be as dark and despairing as was the first century before Christianity appeared.

What is the secret of its power, if Christ did not rise from the dead?

If the men who first preached this redeeming Gospel had not truly believed that their Lord had really risen from the dead, they would never have dared to proclaim it. Most certainly they would not have died

for it, as did most of them. Least of all, would Saul of Tarsus, in the noon-tide of his life, have renounced the teachings of Gamaliel, severed his position of honor in the sect of the Pharisees, and devoted all his remaining days to the propagation of this religion, if he had not been convinced that Jesus had risen and was alive forever more. In the first century, therefore, no Gospel of Christ would have been preached and no Christian Church would have been born, if the great Apostle to the Gentiles and the other Apostles had not believed indubitably the fact of the resurrection. And but for their confident belief and courageous preaching there would be in our day also no Christianity for the men of the present day to discuss and declare.

Now, if Christ did not actually rise, the belief of the Apostles and the Churches which they founded was a delusion, and that delusion has saved the world! And the faith founded in that delusion is the religion of the foremost nations now living on the planet and the only hope of salvation for all mankind! If that be true, then delusion is better than knowledge and falsehood better than truth! How monstrous is that conclusion!

We cannot leave both Hope and Truth thus dishonored in the closed tomb of Joseph of Arimathea. All history unites its voice with the early believers, and cries joyously, "The Lord is risen indeed!"

And this incontestable fact is not an isolated and sterile marvel. It gives rise to indispensable truth

directly pertaining to life and duty. The Risen Christ, "the Prince of Life," is the source of all spiritual vitality because from Him issues through the Holy Spirit the transforming force which operates in regeneration and persists in sustaining the life of the regenerated soul. Because Christ lives the Christian lives also.

This is the transcendent truth concerning which St. Paul wrote to the Ephesians when he told them that the new birth was the result of the "mighty power, which he [God] wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come" (Ephesians 1:20 and 21).

It was from this superhuman source he informed the Galatians that his own spiritual life derived its existence, saying: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).

To the experience of this supernal life he called the Colossians when he said, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God" (Colossians 3:1).

We are not to conceive that the power of Christ's resurrection is a co-ercive force, constraining the soul and nullifying freedom. It is power that operates in the realm of the spiritual world in harmony with the

laws of that world even as in accordance with the nature of the physical world it effectuated the bodily resurrection of the crucified Redeemer.

Its consequences in the spiritual world, however, are not less real and wonderful. It effects a mighty renewal and exaltation of moral life analogous to nothing else so much as to the raising of Jesus from the dead. It does not co-erce, but it converts the soul; and conversion is no small change.

Jesus described it as nothing less than being "born again"—"born from above" (John 3:3). It is such a union with the risen and ever living Savior as justifies the great Apostle saying: "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (II Corinthians 5:17). In the Epistle to the Colossians it is set forth as a "deliverance from the power of the darkness and translation into the Kingdom of God's dear son" which makes one "meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light" (Colossians 1:12 and 13).

Christian life, therefore, is not an earth-born and commonplace thing. It arises from the great miracle of the resurrection repeated in the human soul.

They do greatly err who would have us believe that Jesus knew no bodily resurrection, and that belief in His resurrection is not necessary to Christian life. His resurrection was very real, and when it is reduced to a mere phantom, the source of Christian life is evaporated and Christian experience becomes a shadowy and impotent mist of unreality.

The great facts of the Incarnation, the Virgin Birth of Jesus and His bodily Resurrection, are the foundations of the Christian faith and the perennial springs of Christian life.

Men need today, and will need forever, the Incarnation, as truly as did the men of the first century. It is no transient and sterile spectacle utterly unrelated to Christian experience.

Johann Schefler wrote in perfect truth the beautiful lines,

> "Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem be born,
> If He's not born in thee, thy soul is still forlorn."

The obstacles to Christian life are too great to be overcome by a feeble faith; and the proper elevation of it is too lofty to be attained by an unmiraculous religion. It is reached and retained by "the power of the resurrection." No less force is equal to its initial production and perpetual promotion.

Christ's resurrection is the source of the power of Christian life in this world and the ground of its confident faith in the life eternal. "Christ in us" is the basis of our "hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27). The heaven begun makes the heaven to come credible.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again into a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us" (I Peter 1:3-4).

"Blest be the everlasting God,
The Father of our Lord;
Be his abounding mercy praised,
His majesty adored.

"When from the dead he raised his Son,
And called him to the sky,
He gave our souls a lively hope
That they should never die.

"There's an inheritance divine,
Reserved against that day,
'Tis uncorrupted, undefiled,
And cannot pass away.

"Saints by the power of God are kept,
Till the salvation come;
We walk by faith, as strangers here,
Till Christ shall take us home."

## The Inspirational Life

*By* A. Z. Conrad, D.D., park street congregational church, boston

*"He breathed on them and saith unto them: 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost.'"*

—JOHN XX – 22

*"But ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you."*

—ACTS 1 – 8

THE inspirational life is the life inbreathed of the Holy Spirit. Its source is definitely Divine. The natural partakes of the supernatural when the Holy Spirit is received into the soul. This is the strongest expression which could be used to indicate the definite, Divine impartation to human personality. Jesus laid great emphasis upon the fact that when He had departed, God the Spirit would be an omnipresent fact universally available and would empower the Disciples to fulfill their mission in life. This serious and beautiful assurance of our Lord occurred after His Resurrection and became the comforting guarantee of victory which emboldened the disciples to undertake the terrifically difficult task of propagating Christianity. They went again and again to martyrdom with calmness and without complaint because they had been empowered by the Holy Spirit to endure. Again and again Disciples spake far above the level of their ordi-

nary intellectual ability, under the inspiration of the Divine Spirit. "*Plus ultra*" is the inspiring legend confronting the thoughtful student at every frontier terminal. The circle of the demonstrated only widens the horizon of the unrevealed yet ever available. The inspirational life regards periods not as finalities, not as terminal points even, but as gateways to the unexplored and undemonstrated. Each successful conclusion for the Christian represents only a new beginning. Just as we name the concluding period of academic study, commencement, because it is an inauguration of the larger term of study in life's great university, so we designate each achievement in the Christian life as a beginning rather than an end. The retrospective and the reminiscent have a proper place at various points in life's progress, but after all, the principal thing is outlook through inspiration. All great questions and problems, religious, sociological, scientific, political, express a kind of challenge to every serious-minded man or woman. Congratulation and felicitation is perfectly appropriate whenever some great task is completed, but far more important is a contemplation of the priceless privileges and matchless opportunities of life. The inspirational life has its regulative principles within and works under the spell of benign compulsions which lead to heroic endeavor without in the least limiting the freedom of the will. The inspirational life draws unceasingly upon invisible supplies and because reënforced is enabled to contribute continuously without exhaustion, to impart

unceasingly without depletion. Being inbreathed of God such a life, in turn, inbreathes other lives and becomes therefore doubly inspirational through what it receives and what it gives.

### THE PURSUED AND THE ATTAINED

To every aspiring soul, the wide disparity between the pursued and the attained is nothing less than appalling. One is overawed by a sense of the potential mood. One is overwhelmed by the sense of the imperative mood. May and must stand so far apart and yet so closely related, that you cannot contemplate one without the other. Between the idea and the realized the vastness of the distance would be disheartening, were it not for the unmistakable assurance of the possibility of Divinely inbreathed wisdom and power. The ideal as it is presented to us, in Revelation, always appeals to us as the possible. "I ought, therefore I can." Such was the dictum of the philosopher who more than most men of his day recognized the inseparableness of duty and ability. We are utterly unable to free ourselves from a sense of obligation to do the thing that unaided finiteness is ever scornfully telling us is impossible. Somehow we know God imposes no duty which cannot be performed. "I ought" is affirmed by the conscience of much that is vastly beyond the power of our natural ability. How can we reconcile this urge to undertaking, seemingly so hopeless?

Faith comes to our rescue at this very point. The pull and pursuit of a flying goal would make life

confusing and even chaotic, if we were to be left to unaided finiteness. The ideals of life imperatively demand the assistance and contribution which only God can give. On the human side faith and faith alone can appropriate sufficiently the supernatural to make the claims of conscience consistent. An undefined sense of justice insists that ability and obligation must be in equilibrium. Who is willing to believe that our highest conceptions are tantalizing Utopias dooming us to lives of baffled endeavor and ultimate defeat? Faith answers the soul's yearning cry for enough of Almightiness to enable us to move on aggressively, though every step be contested, to those celestial summits where all the beatific glory of transfiguration becomes the normal experience of life. Every widening of the intellectual horizon, every new truth discovery increases the demand for an availing and achieving Faith. We must develop an ability to appropriate and utilize invisible, intangible treasure for the enrichment of life and the empowerment of the soul. Human aspiration utterly fails to enjoy satisfaction through the offerings of the sense world. Equally evident is it, that processes of mentality however energetic and persistent do not result in contributions to personality that will meet the wants of an aspiring life. The longest chain of logic stops of what is felt to be the final goal. Destiny is a large word. It points to an objective as high and as holy as origin. To the Author of life must we look for the

inbreathing which will enable us to move on toward perfection.

### DIVINE RESOURCE ACCESSIBLE AND AVAILABLE

We are conducted to the borderland of the defined and demonstrated and bidden to look out upon the vast immeasurable unknown with the eye of Faith in order that we may see that which is invisible and appropriate and enjoy what is both immeasurable and intangible to the natural senses. Natural and revealed religion alike declare for a communicative, contributing, empowering God. Faith forms the connection between the measurable and the Infinite. Soul satisfaction is measured only in terms of worship and service. The incentive to service is the conviction of the reality of that invisible treasure which Faith undertakes to make the possession of a soul. Conscious peace is impossible apart from conscious power. Hope dies in the presence of weakness. To be weak is to be miserable. Ability is indispensable to complacency. Power itself is an inspirational thing. God has so ordered it that judicious employment is the *sine qua non* of increased bestowal. The man who hides his talent, is impoverished, without hope of release. In the central power station where power is generated for electric cars there is an automatic mechanism whereby power is only generated as it is called for by actual "draw" out on the line. If fifty cars are calling for power the generator will act to produce it. If half of the cars are idle, the generator refuses to send out the

power and thus waste it. The life which seriously undertakes great tasks will be enforced for those tasks. Incompetents are those who are not engaged in behalf of humanity or for the glory of God. Edward the Black Prince at the battle of Cressy three times sent pathetic appeals to his father asking for reserves because he thought the battle was going against him but the reserves were not sent and finally the answer presented to him by a courier was this "You have a father who loves you too much to withhold help when it is needed and one too wise not to know when it is really required." Much more true is this of the Infinite Father whose resources are measureless. Soul power is not determined by evolutionary processes, whereby capacity for the Divine is amplified, but rather by a vital and immediate connection with God Almighty insuring His immediate response to the soul's deepest call. We realize our ideals not by beatific contemplation but by an achieving faith and an energetic devotion. The world is rich in knowledge and in human wisdom. By no means let us disparage the wealth of learning from which we may draw. Our great libraries containing the ripest thoughts of the ripest minds in all the realms of learning may well be contemplated with satisfaction. They are a wonderful testimony to the self-sacrificing devotion of the men and women of past ages. They are a great reservoir, which may be employed to slake the thirst for learning experienced by the ardent youth of our time. Yet how poor would life be if its sole treasure consisted in the defined and

demonstrated, the measured, the visible and the tangible. Schopenhauer, among the philosophers, reveals the fact that a sense of emptiness is felt when faith is abandoned; when faith makes no contributions to human life. His destructive mood resulted in a hopeless pessimism. Dean Swift caught in the maelstrom of doubt found little incentive to effort and nothing to gladden his sad heart as the even-tide of life came on. Edwin Arnold employed beautiful imagery to portray his thoughts but that does not conceal the dark and rayless night with its cold and chill and unrelieved peacelessness in which his latest years were spent. The seductive charm of "The Light of Asia" can not possibly blind one to the fact that Arnold had lost the higher vision of the "Light of the World." The life which is wanting in the inspirations which faith gives is portrayed in all of its gloomy hopelessness in James Thompson's "City of Dreadful Night." When last-century philosophy had proven faithless and the world turned to science in its search for relief a crass materialism resulted. The declaration that nature is both inexorable and pitiless and that the world could not have been the work of a God of love was leading steadily toward Atheism. Darwin, Haeckel and Lewes all presented theories which left no place for any true ethic in nature. Such cosmic antagonism to revealed religion as they found was felt by believers to be untrue to fact and the reaction against their position was strong both inside and outside of the Church. Without disparaging the intellectualism of Hume, the

powerful mentality of Kant or the poetic beauty of Arnold, this is to be said of all of them that they fail and utterly fail because they do not make for the Inspirational Life. A multitude of eminent scientists disagree absolutely with all those who find no place for ethics in nature. Browning and Tennyson and Wordsworth and Bryant and Whittier, thoroughly inspirational in all their writings, have made large contributions to true faith in the highest and holiest. Faith which produces the Inspirational Life is not to be confused with mere credulity. Indeed there is no such thing as a blind faith. Faith must be rational. It rests upon foundations of highest and holiest reasons. It makes apparent the naturalness of the supernatural and the reasonableness of the superlogical. We have been moving steadily into a zone of thought which has as its slogan "Nothing above the natural." It is an attitude which is necessarily prejudiced against true Revelation. This is a period of intense criticism and also of wide and earnest research. Christianity would encourage with all heartiness the intensest and devoutest thinking. No objection can be offered to the critical attitude provided it is reverent and unprejudiced. Let it not be supposed that the scientific and philsophical research of today is altogether without spiritual incentive and spiritual objective. Eminent students in all departments of learning, devoutly Christian, commandingly intellectual, find no contradiction whatsoever between a revealed religion and science. The demands of reason are continuous and

inexorable but reason cannot answer her own demands or solve her own riddles until faith comes to give supersight and insight.

### HIGH IDEALS

Life becomes truly inspirational only when it is harmonious with the Infinite will. Exalted ideals are the ever-present facts in the Inspirational Life. The life of Jesus was not only inspirational but it was thoroughly revolutionary in its ideals of life and living. The false estimates and motives which have so long obtained were corrected by Jesus who set a new value upon the worth of the individual, and presented human personality as God's highest opportunity. Jesus reversed the mathematical order as it obtains in the material world, when applied to spiritual realities. He taught that men must lose in order to gain, must seemingly suffer defeat in order to victory, must attain eminence through humility, must multiply by dividing, must die in order to live. The paradox, "When I am weak then am I strong," was presented by Jesus as one of the greatest of life's realities. Jesus manifested His greatest sympathy and interest in the nethermost and the hindermost who still aspire. His word of cheer was for the man outranked, yet running. He taught the graciousness of sympathy, the sublimity of humility, the dignity of self-effacement, the Divineness of sacrifice. He declared for a brotherhood universal, for a political and social economy highly ethical and for the true unity of the race. The

ideals of Jesus stand today as the most perfect expression of Divine purpose the world has ever known. Emerson said, "Not failure but low aim is crime." There are ideals exalted, inspired, toward which humanity must ever thrive, if they expect progress to be constant and uninterrupted. Materialism and naturalism prohibit the higher conceptions and the finest distinctions of life. One of the distinguishing characteristics of faith is its creating quality. The art galleries of the world, the libraries of the world, and the entire history of human achievement declare positively and unequivocally for faith's inspirations. The paintings which make their strongest appeal to the soul were wrought by men to whom God had said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." The same thing is true regarding musical compositions which have proven perennial fountains of joy. The great Oratories, the hymns of the Church which have done so much to develop her courage and enthusiasm have been the product of minds fairly saturated with the Spirit.

### POWER OF INITIATIVE

The most exalted ideals are comparatively valueless until the fires of a great conviction blaze in them, and heroic courage undertakes to practicalize them in daily life. Timidity and hesitancy are natural because of the apparently stupendous magnitude of tasks which confront the man who is seeking to actualize life's ideals. Human ability is nowhere more resplendent than when expressing a power of initiative. Not

following precedent but making precedent is the mark of greatness. The creators of a great literature, the founders of a State, the builders of nations, all have had an intrepid spirit of venture. The history of Christianity is the record of one long series of courageous initiation leading the world to new social and industrial undertakings. The history of our own country is particularly rich in expression of the wisdom and courage of personalities capable of initiating untried experiments in government. All reformations demand this same quality of initiative, backed up by the more serious and severe expressions of supernatural Power. Faith alone can produce the calm assurance which will lead to stupendous undertakings and the inauguration of great social movements looking to the betterment of humanity. Last century witnessed the successive moods of Atheism, Agnosticism, Materialism, Naturalism, Rationalism and Idealism. Faith triumphantly passed through all of these and compelled each of them to make some contribution to her own complete victory. The cycle was completed and now we are entering again upon the same dismal round of unbelief with its depressing moral influence. Hebraism, Romanism and Hellenism at the beginnings of Christianity stood challenging the advance of faith. Each in turn was conquered and indeed was made to contribute to faith's onward march. Recently an unfriendly science and hostile philosophy has been compelled to pay tribute to faith. The apostles of doubt and negation sing their dirges while Faith chants her

pæns of victory. Faith stands for the truly inspirational life. She asserts herself particularly in behalf of the poor and friendless and builds conspicuous witnesses to her power through men like Mueller and Bernardo. She goes into the darker places of our great cities in the name of university settlements and kindred philanthropies and awakens hope and stimulates ambition where they had been lost. Christian Faith declares for civic righteousness and social purity and is the soul of all true humanism. When the world loses her high ideals because intoxicated with her own powers of intellection, with a false science, with cold materialism, Faith speaks inspirationally and men catch glimpses of the glory of God and the grandeur of goodness. Just now the Christian world is needing the Divine inbreathing. Christ is calling to a Church none too enthusiastic, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Whenever the Christian Church responds to this appeal of heaven she becomes immediately conscious of a new power and engages herself in the interests of a lost world.

### POWER OF ACHIEVEMENT

Unfinished tasks confront us on every hand. Sustained effort requires more inspiration than determined attack. "This man began to build and was not able to finish" is the derisive and sometimes pathetic refrain as we look upon the unfinished buildings about us. Every spiritual advance is challenged. To carry to completion an inspired program tests both faith

and courage to the uttermost. It is the reassurances of Faith which keep alive the fires of enthusiasm in the presence of chilling snows and multiplied perils. Spiritual imperialism is the high aim of those who love God and humanity. John Stuart Mill said, "Life is for knowledge." Herbert Spencer said, "Knowledge is for life." Faith says, "Both are right and all are for the imperialism of spirit." Persistency in great undertakings demands a right perspective and a continuous inbreathing of God. Only unremitting and unwearying prosecution of apparently impossible tasks will insure ultimate coronation.

### PARALLELING THE PURPOSES OF GOD

That God has a plan and a purpose for each individual life, is clearly revealed. The acceptance of that fact has everything to do with courageous engagement. In the pursuit of ideals immeasurably beyond us; in the striving and struggling for sunlit summits, the supremely encouraging fact is, God Almighty has planned success and not failure for each individual. Paralleling the purposes of God is not only our highest duty but our one and only guarantee of making life worth living. Christ's unique place in the history of the race lay in this one fact, He paralleled the purposes of God. He said: "I do always the things that please Him." The controlling objective in a truly eminent life is the fulfilment of a Divine will. There are volumes of truth in the answer of the Westminster Catechism to the question:

"What is the chief end of man?" "To glorify God and enjoy Him for ever." The latter part of this answer is all too often neglected. We seem to fail to understand that God is not only to be obeyed but to enjoy. There should be therefore a supreme happiness in Christian service. Whenever a person can say of his avocation, "To this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world," then hope and happiness are sure to abound in that life. God Almighty is not to be regarded as a spectator, but as a participant. It makes a difference, to him, whether or not we succeed. He is for us and not against us. When the will of God is the law of life, progress is as sure to follow as light follows the sunrise. Make the will of God the law of life and the purpose of God the plan of life and all the powers of earth and hell combined will be no match for your power and your wisdom and nothing can prevent your success.

### WHAT IS WORTH WHILE?

With regard to life's activities a perfectly legitimate inquiry is this: does it pay? A thousand siren voices call upon us for our approbation and our patronage and for the dedication of our gifts. Life is struggle, conflict, war. Waste is wickedness. What investment will really pay dividends? What is worth while? A very eminent political leader in New York was asked upon his birthday for an expression of his feeling. He answered, "My years have been many. Some have been fruitful. Many of them have been

barren. But none of them have been worth while." What a pathetic confession. No Disciple of Jesus Christ could possibly give utterance to such a thought. Who is willing to put up the fight of years, and laboriously engage in life's successive activities with only a probability that he will be compelled to say at sunset as he thinks of the years he has lived, "None of them have been worth while." The fact is, no fatalistic conception of the universe can make life worth living. If the individual is merely a product of chemical forces, and with no guarantee of immortality, life then is less than worth while, it is a rank and dismal failure. The lament of Lord Byron while he was yet in his youth, is a pitiful confession, that a life of unbelief is a life of distressing disaster.

> "My days are in the yellow leaf;
> The flowers and fruits of life are gone;
> The worm, the canker, and the grief
> Are mine alone!"

Jesus Christ made perfectly evident that His coming into this world had just one purpose, "Abounding Life." No word in the English language is more filled with meaning than the short, simple word, "life." In the Christian conception it is vastly more than existence. Until man is more than man, he is less than really human. We come therefore, to the inquiry, "What are the conditions which man must fulfill in order to receive this inbreathing of God of which our text speaks?" Man was created in the image of God. By his own act of transgression, he lost the glory given

him at creation. One little word spells disaster to the human race, SIN. Sin introduces into the soul a destructive element which ultimately works complete ruin unless counter-acted. The only antidote for sin which has ever been effective is God's inbreathing which is nothing more nor less than the Holy Spirit entering into the soul of man. Christ's imperative to all humanity is this, "Ye must be born again." To show His Infinite Love for the world, God the Son took upon Himself humanity and came in the likeness of sinful flesh to walk with men and then die for man as the supreme evidence of the measureless love of God. The story of complete transformation is told in the third chapter of John's Gospel. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosover believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." There can be no mistaking the plain significance of the teaching of the Gospel regarding sin and salvation. The lostness of man is no philosophical pinion. It is the clearest declaration of God's revelation and human experience alike. Man is saved from the guilt of sin and the love of sinning in just one way. Regeneration through the Holy Spirit! Salvation either through character or the exercise of resident forces in the soul is the worst of all delusions. In practical experience, it simply does not work. It is the testimony of untold millions that the acceptance of Jesus Christ, as a Personal Saviour, removes the burden of guilt and at the same time furnishes a powerful incentive to a Christ-like life. Nothing seems

more chaotic and purposeless than the bobbin-throwing of the worker in the Gobelin tapestry, at the early stages. Among the hundreds of colors no appreciable plan is in view. But as time advances, harmony and order are brought out and the artist's conception is materialized. However perfect the plan of the designer, unless the worker follows the design, his work will be a failure. It is precisely so in life. Nothing but obedience to the will of God can result in a perfected life. There is one inner urge commanding and controlling which will lead to the very acme of human success, that is, love. The world has known no compulsion comparable to the compulsion of redemptive love. It was this which led Jesus voluntarily to go to His Cross. It is sacrificial love which today urges men and women to their most heroic achievement.

### DEFEATING GOD'S PLAN

Nothing gives to life more serious thought than the perilous power of defeating God's plan for us individually. In its broad and general scope there is no possible question but what God Almighty will carry His purposes to the utmost completeness. God has given to man, however, the power of abandoning His purpose and His will, thus defeating the Divine intent for the individual. A tiny bit of steel in the mariner's compass will overcome the pull of the north pole and lead to the wreckage of the ship. Three things serve to bring us at cross purposes with God and induce failure. The fear of criticism; love of applause; the

passion for pleasure. The one indispensable to the victorious life is the fulfilment of the exhortation of Jesus, "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and His righteousness."

A three-fold faith alone will make us irresistible. Belief in God, belief in humanity, belief in self. It is something to recognize personality and say "I am." But a great step in advance has been taken when looking Godward you say with firm conviction and belief, "Thou art." But the climax of hope and holy enthusiasm only comes when you throw out the hand of faith and grasp the outstretched hand of Infinite love and say "We are." Then defeats are turned to victory and life's sorrow to abiding joy. It is the glory of the Inspirational Life that it is climacteric. It always has outlook. Hope sits at the helm in all storms. In the Lion of Lucerne I see the type of character which leaves a lasting monument after the day's work is done. This marvelous sculpture after the plan of Thorwaldson, carved in the living rock, represents the King of the Forest dying, a broken lance protruding from his body. His outstretched paw protects the Bourbon lily on the shield and as though caressing it his head reaches out toward it affectionately. It was erected in memory of the Swiss guard who died defending the Tuileries in Paris. The immediate suggestion of the statue to me is: "Faithful unto death." Such is precisely the distinguishing characteristic of the Inspirational Life. Such a life fears no foe and stops at no sacrifice. The crying need of the Christian

Church today is a recognition that the real dynamic of Christianity is the Holy Spirit. Our weakness has been our self-dependence. Jesus Christ is not less ready today to utter the words "Peace be unto you." Upon those who will it so He still says: "Receive ye the Holy Spirit." Conscious of Divine power, urged on by redeeming love, life becomes rich in opportunity and measureless in power and transcendently victorious. With Maltibe Babcock, we may sing confidently,

"This is my Father's world,
Oh let me ne'er forget,
Though wrong seems oft so strong,
God is the ruler yet.

"This is my Father's world,
The battle is not done.
Jesus who died shall be satisfied,
And earth and heaven be one.

"This is my Father's world,
If ere my heart is sad,
The Lord is King,
Let the heavens ring,
God reigns, let the earth be glad."

## What Is Religion?

*By* Rev. James M. Gillis, editor "catholic world," new york

*"Thou has made us for Thyself, O God, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee."*

—st. augustine

THE most ancient and elementary desire of the human heart is the desire for God. Indeed, the passionate longing of man for God is not only ancient but aboriginal, not only deep-seated, but ineradicable. At certain times, and in some places, scepticism and materialism seem to prevail, but irreligion never really gets deep into the soul of the race. Religion always recurs, when artificial restraint is lifted, and if the restraint be prolonged, religion bursts forth with violence. It cannot be permanently suppressed, any more than a volcano can be smothered. Some one has said, "Christianity has been disproven an unconscionable number of times." Likewise, religion has been discredited in every century and every generation. But —and this fact is significant—the invidious task of driving out religion from men's hearts always has to be done over again. Man reverts invariably to what is natural to him. The latest attempt to wean man away from God is now in progress in Moscow and throughout Soviet Russia. But if the Bolshevik lead-

ers had studied the history of revolutions, especially of religious revolutions, as carefully as they claim to have done, they would have shunned the absurdity of proscribing religion. They are but repeating the blunders of the past. Their only original contribution to the propaganda of atheism is a new slogan, "Religion is the opiate of the people." They have adopted that battle cry in place of "*Ecrasons l'infame*," and other such formulæ. But religion is not to be slain with slogans. Nor can it be obliterated by governmental decrees, no matter how relentlessly and cruelly they may be enforced. If it were possible to raze all churches, temples, and synagogues, and to massacre every priest and every minister of religion, religion would spring up again out of the soil, and out of the human heart. The earth will not be rid of religion until it is rid of man. For man is incurably religious. Any one who, like Jesus Christ, "knows what is in man," is aware of what has been called, quite aptly, "the inveterate mysticism of the human heart."

It will be interesting therefore to consider the precise nature of this universal and indestructible phenomenon,—religion. Let us, therefore, ask the question, "What is Religion?" and let us come at our answer by means of a process of elimination.

It must be evident, to all who read either history or psychology, that mere morality cannot be substituted for religion. There is, of course, a modern notion that the only safe and sane religion is morality,—"moral-

ity touched with emotion," as Matthew Arnold used to say. To live clean, to work hard, to do good, to pay one's debts, to be a desirable citizen,—and all that—is doubtless praiseworthy. But it is not religion. Ethical culture bears the same relation to religion as a marble statue bears to a creature of flesh and blood. Perhaps we all remember the story of the little girl who became dissatisfied with her doll, and declared that she wanted a "meat baby." The race of mankind is like that. Ethical culture leaves it cold. All "natural religions" remain the playthings of little cliques of the *soi-disante élite*. Man, in the mass, will have nothing to do with them. He demands the supernatural, the mystical. True, this craving for the supernatural may open the door to superstition. But the human race has never been excessively chary of superstition. It will risk a little superstition rather than denature religion.

Furthermore, (though it may savor of scandal to admit it) religion can exist without morality. I speak of a *de facto* condition, not of an ideal. Religion frequently exists, and even flourishes exuberantly, side by side with an atrophied morality. Religion can survive even when conscience is dead. So religion and morality are not only not identical. They need not even be co-incident.

Nor is religion to be confounded with philosophy. Philosophy is the pursuit of Truth, perhaps we may say, the worship of Truth. Now Truth is God, and

hence to worship Truth might seem the same as to worship God. But religion is more than philosophy. A man may philosophize for a lifetime, and scarcely experience one moment of religious feeling, or perform one act of religion.

There is, (to mention but one difference) a sense of certainty in religion, that is wanting in philosophy. In pursuit of truth, the philosopher will follow one path for some distance, become perplexed, and retrace his steps, only to try another, and yet another road to his goal. But the religious man once he has found his road, holds to it, and as Chesterton has said of St. Joan of Arc, he "goes down it like a thunderbolt." To change the metaphor,—the philosophical mind plays with truths, juggles truths, scrutinizes them, selects and rejects them, throws them down and picks them up again: but the religious man lays hold on Truth, and says to Truth, "I will not let Thee go!" "O Truth, my God, make me one with Thee, in everlasting love," cries à Kempis. Has any philosopher loved truth so passionately?

Again, religion is not synonymous with theology. A man may be profoundly religious, and care but little for theology. In his impetuosity he may even utter words that seem to indicate disdain for theology. To quote again the author of the *Imitation of Christ*, "What signifies making a great dispute about hidden and obscure things . . . and what matter is it to us of *genera* or *species*. He to whom the Eternal Word speaketh is delivered from a multitude of opinions.

What doth it profit thee to dispute learnedly of the Trinity, if thou be wanting in humility, and so be displeasing to the Trinity?" Evidently the gentle saint who wrote these words was a bit impatient with some professional theologians, if not with theology itself. But no one questions his being genuinely and deeply religious. Nor would even the most zealous champion of orthodoxy deny that religion pure and simple often exists in a soul innocent of theology. In fact, it is a familiar and favorite thought in theological circles that the "old woman telling her beads under the pulpit" may love God, and be loved of God more than the learned Doctor of Divinity.

Religion, therefore, is not identical with morality, or philosophy, or theology. What then *is* religion?

Without attempting to give, at this moment, an adequate theological definition, let us say that primarily religion is the recognition of the fact that all creation is mysterious and points to an Ultimate and Eternal Mystery beyond this visible universe. The origin of this religious instinct is doubtless supernatural, that is to say, directly infused by God into the soul of man. But I think we may say that man's natural experience confirms the divine revelation.

For the world in which we live is filled with mystery, and the sense of mystery is akin to the instinct of religion. I do not say that one who senses the mystery in the universe is necessarily religious. A poet or

a philosopher may recognize the presence of mystery about us and yet not be professedly religious. But the poet, the artist, the musician, the philosopher, the scientist, the scholar, in fine all who seek after truth or beauty, are, knowingly or unknowingly, "searchers after God." If once they could but recognize that the all-pervading Mystery is personal, then the zeal of the scholar, the rapture and ecstasy of the artist and the poet would become religious experiences. "He is not far from any one of you," says St. Paul, quoting "one of your own poets." "In Him we live and move and have our being." He is like the atmosphere, which we cannot see, but in which and by which we live. He is more. He is like some one close to us, but invisible. "Our eyes are held" that we cannot see Him. But we "seek the Lord if haply (we) may feel after Him and find Him."

Lovers of Truth and Beauty, however they may differ, or imagine that they differ one from another, are all lovers of God. Some of them need to be warned in the words of St. Augustine, "seek what ye seek, but it is not where ye seek it." But whether they seek wisely or unwisely, in the true direction or in the false, they are all restless with the passion for God; "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O God, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee."

Not only poets and other men of unusual talent, but all men, (except those who have been quite degenerated by an artificial civilization) are aware of

an elusive but ever-present Reality behind the things that appear. "We cannot see His form but we can see His shadow. We cannot hear His Voice, but we can hear His footfall." The nearness of the Unseen baffles us, provokes us, leads us on. If our hearts are right, the presence of mystery subdues us, chastens us, makes us tread softly wherever we go. All ground is Holy Ground. Every bush may, as we gaze at it, become a burning bush. The poet, or the prophet, or the saint, is merely one who sees a bit clearer than the rest of us, and who, seeing, has the gift of telling, at least to some extent, what he sees. The poet, perhaps above other men, is a seer. If he be no seer, he is no poet. If he be a seer indeed, he can see beauty and glory, not only in a sunset and a waterfall, or a snow-capped mountain, but in those things that to the unimaginative (that is, to those who cannot see the unseen) are prosaic and sordid. Wordsworth has the truth,

> "There was a time when meadow, grove and stream,
> *The earth and every common sight,*
> To me did seem apparelled in celestial light."

One man, looking at a blade of grass, sees only an insignificant thing which "is to-day but to-morrow is cast into the oven;"

> "A primrose by a river's brim,
> A yellow primrose is to him,
> And it is nothing more."

But the sight of a blade of grass, or a yellow prim-

rose, or the fallen petal of a rose, prompts in the heart your true poet.

"Thoughts that lie too deep for tears."

Here the poet is one with the mystic. Many students of the psychology of religion have recounted the mysterious illumination of nature in the eyes of one whose soul is newly awakened. "Natural objects were glorified. I saw beauty in every material object in the universe. The woods were vocal with heavenly music," says one. And to another even his horses and hogs seemed changed, and, says a third, "When I went to the fields to work, every straw and head of the oats seemed, as it were, arrayed in a kind of rainbow glory."

It is easy to say that the poet or the mystic reproduces visions that exist only in his own exuberant imagination. But the fact that *we* cannot see what he sees is no proof that *he* does not see it. We see it after he sees it, as he makes us see it. The painter who puts on canvas, or the etcher who puts on paper, only the crass thing that strikes the carnal eye, is no artist. He must make us see what the eye does not see.

It is so with the poet. He must make us see what "eye hath not seen," and hear what "ear hath not heard." Mrs. Meynell, in one of her charming little introductions to certain selected poems in *The Flower of the Mind*, exclaims, "How often we say 'It was so beautiful that I have no words to express it,'" adding, "Tennyson has the words!" Yet it was Tennyson

who lamented, "I would that my tongue could utter the thoughts that arise in me." The truth is that sometimes he had the words, and again he had not the words. Every seer sees more than he can tell. St. Paul, St. Teresa, all the prophets and poets and mystics, tell us much of the other world, and then complain that they can't even begin to tell us.

Now, what the poets and the artists and the mystics cannot tell us, is the very object of religion. They are all concerned primarily with the Invisible. Even the devout simple believer, who sees no visions, experiences no ecstasies, is, none the less, in aspirations and longing reaching out to the unseen. Where there is none of this longing and effort, there is no religion.

All the universe, then, is mystery. But even more, man is mystery. Human nature is more inscrutable than any visible or tangible object. They who deny the mystery in man can never have studied man. "The proper study of mankind is man," but it is a difficult study, and few there are that have either the patience or the wisdom to undertake it. But, properly studied, the heart and mind of man are a revelation of God. For man is made "in the image and likeness of God," and to know man is to begin to know God. Shakespeare, in common with all poets, felt the mystery. Witness the paradox: "In action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a God," and yet "this quintessence of dust." Man himself is mystery more baffling than either the inanimate or the brute creation.

For that reason, the outstanding geniuses of the

human race are not those who have studied the course of the planets around the sun, not those who have spent long lives humped over books in libraries, with their be-spectacled eyes riveted on some "volume of forgotten lore;" not those who potter about in chemical laboratories scrutinizing the contents of test tubes, or peering through the lenses of a microscope to spy upon the antics of some wriggling bacilli; not those who ensconce themselves in a cage in the heart of the jungle to catch upon a phonographic disk the sounds that they are pleased to call the speech of monkeys: not these are the superlatively great men of our race, but those who have by intuition the uncanny power of penetrating flesh and blood, of reading the revelation that has been written on the "fleshly tables of the heart," and then of revealing man to himself. One of the young men who listened to Newman at St. Mary's, Oxford, used to say that the secret of the power the great preacher exercised over the undergraduates was that "he revealed ourselves to ourselves, and the revelation startled us." The revelation of man to man is a work worthy of an inspired prophet. The sacred scriptures, be it remembered, are as much a revelation of man, as they are of God. But whether one read the inspired scriptures, or the heart of man, or the documents of human history, one fact repeatedly emerges: "In the last resort, the destinies of mankind are invariably guided, not by the concrete 'facts' of the sense world, but by concepts which are acknowledged by every one to exist only on the men-

tal plane. In the great moments of existence, when he rises to spiritual freedom, these are the things which every man feels to be real. It is by these and for these that he is found willing to live, work, suffer, and die. Love, empire, religion, altruism, fame, all belong to the transcendental world." That is to say, to put it baldly, man is preëminently a religious being.

I have included scientists among those engaged in the high and holy vocation of interpreting God and man and the universe. Unfortunately, some scientists have failed to see the dignity of their own calling. Haeckel—to take the most extreme example—declares, in his offensively dogmatic way, "Our human nature, which exalted itself into an image of God, sinks (under scientific scrutiny) to the level of a placental mammal, which has no more value for the universe at large than the ant, or the fly of a summer's day, the microsopic *infusorium*, or the smallest bacillus." The trouble with such dicta as these is that they contradict the aboriginal conviction of the human race. There is no need of refuting Haeckel, still less of growing angry with him. He himself is the one who seems to be angry with all mankind. But it is foolish, not to say arrogant to get angry with the human race. The race has a way of vindicating itself. The individual dies, and the race continues. And the race, as we have seen, returns again and again, infallibly to religion. The true scientist will take account of that fact, and deal with it, as scientists are wont to deal with any fact,—reverently.

It is frequently said, by apologists of religion, that science does not conflict with religion. But to say merely that there is no conflict, is to understate the truth most miserably. Science and religion have the same subject matter,—mystery. Men used to say, "Philosophy is the handmaid of religion." Men will say, in centuries to come, "Science is the coadjutor of religion." The scientist, like the theologian, is trying to penetrate the veil that separates the seen from the unseen, the known from the unknown. And every time the scientist sees something beyond, he also sees, in the selfsame flash of light, that the unknown world is vaster and more marvelous than he had hitherto imagined. I wonder that scientists, at work in their laboratories or their observatories, do not collapse to their knees, and bow their heads in silent adoration of the vast Unseen. Perhaps they do. Keats imagined that the astronomers and explorers felt the same mystic exaltation as the poets, "Then felt I like some watcher of the skies when a new planet swims into his ken." Is there not ecstasy and silent worship under the little domes of observatories, as under the big dome of heaven? And did not "stout Cortes" (let us grant Keats his Cortes) "and all his men, look at each other with a wild surmise, silent upon a peak in Darien"?

This is religion, and poetry, and science. They are all essentially the same. They are all concerned ultimately with the Unseen, the Illimitable, the Infinite, the only Partially Known. Some pseudo-scientists, of narrow mental gauge, think and say that science

has done away with mystery and miracle. True scientists know that science has enormously increased the sense of mystery, and that all nature is a huge miracle.

We have no miracle in religion greater than the miracle of the rising and setting of the sun. The rotation of the earth upon its axis is as bewildering to the brain as the procession of the Son and the Holy Ghost from the Father. Electricity is as mysterious and as incomprehensible as the Blessed Eucharist. Even Huxley used to say that one could not experiment with the physical without promptly encountering the metaphysical, and that there is as much mystery in a hen's egg as in the Trinity. The origin of a human being, from the coalition of a couple of microscopic particles, which bear no more resemblance to a human body than an invisible mite of marble dust to the Venus de Milo, is so great a mystery that the Church insists that marriage is a matter of religion—a sacrament. All is holy, all is good, save sin,—just as all is mystery. They that have caught a glimpse of these things have commenced to be religious.

They have commenced to be religious. But it cannot be said that they have attained to the fullness of religion. The object of divine worship cannot be blank bewildering mystery. We cannot adore Reality-Behind-the-Phenomenon. The object of worship is a Person,—God. Religion is not merely awe and adoration. It is love and possession of the Beloved. "Whom you therefore ignorantly worship, (the Unknown God,) Him we declare unto you," says St.

Paul. And the declaration is that God has indeed come very close to us. God has become incarnate, in the Person of Jesus Christ. The last word of Revelation is "The Word was made Flesh." God, the infinite Mystery has become visible and tangible. "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled . . . we declare unto you," says the Apostle, St. John. God has not remained "out beyond the shining of the farthest star." He has made it His "delight to be with the children of men."

The Incarnation will seem incredible, and beyond all expectation only to those who have not studied the heart of man. There is, in the book of Exodus, a statement that on one occasion the people said to Moses, "Speak thou with us, and we will hear, but let not God speak unto us, lest we die." But habitually the human race has spoken boldly to God and has demanded that God, in return, shall speak to His creatures. "Keep not Thou silence, O God," cries David, "hold not Thy peace, and be not still." "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth," says Samuel.

Even more,—man has importuned God not merely to speak to man but to permit Himself to be seen by man. "Oh that Thou wouldst rend the heavens and come down. Drop Him down as dew, O ye heavens, and ye clouds rain down the Just One," says the prophet. And the psalmist is equally insistent: "My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God . . .

How long, Lord, wilt Thou hide Thyself forever. Hide not Thy face. As the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress, so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God. As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after Thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. My tears have been my meat day and night, while they continually say to me, where is thy God?"

I need not continue. Those to whom the psalms are familiar (and who is there who does not think and pray with the spirit and the very words of the psalms) will know that these outpourings of the soul of David are in reality the unburdening of the heart of mankind. The voice is the voice of David, but the sentiment is that of the whole human race. The sentence of St. Augustine, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O God, and our hearts are restless until they find rest in Thee," is an epitome of all the hunger and thirst, the passionate demand for God on the part of all races and tribes and peoples in all ages. Possession of God, union with God, not merely in a remote kingdom of the future, but here, now, on this earth, is the ultimate demand of the religious instinct in man.

It is a primary tenet of all religions that God has condescended to this cry of the race. But in Christianity, the union of God and man first in the Person of Jesus Christ, and secondly through Jesus Christ with every man, at least with these men "who are

born not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," is the very essence of the faith.

Man, therefore, begins with a sense of awe in the presence of all-pervading mystery, rises to a knowledge that the Mystery is God; comes to know that God is not a mere Force or a Presence, but a Person. He reaches out to that Person, demanding union. The union is achieved. Man and God are united. This, in the understanding of the race, is Religion.

## "Behold, the Man!"

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*"Behold, the man."*
—JOHN XIX–5

THESE words are from the lips of Pontius Pilate. They were spoken in one of the most dramatic moments in the history of the world. A Roman Procurator stands face to face with a crowd of angry Jews in the City of Jerusalem. Between the Roman official and the crowd there stands a prisoner. The Roman Procurator wants to release the prisoner, the crowd desires to kill him. Pilate has made four attempts to save the prisoner's life. When Jesus was first presented to him he refused to have anything to do with the case. "Take this man," he said, "and judge him yourselves." The crowd shrieked back, "We don't want to judge him ourselves, for we have no authority to put a prisoner to death, and we are determined that this man shall die." After quizzing Jesus for a few moments and learning He was from Galilee, the bright idea occurred to Pilate that this was a case within the jurisdiction of Herod. It so chanced that Herod was in Jerusalem on that very day, and to Herod therefore Jesus was sent. Herod had long wanted to see Jesus,

and proceeded to ask Him questions, but to the questions the prisoner gave no answer. What can a judge do with a prisoner who remains dumb? Jesus was sent back to Pilate. Pilate has not yet exhausted his list of expedients. There is a custom by which the Procurator releases every spring at the time of the Passover, a Jewish prisoner, and why should not Jesus be released? The suggestion is offered but is instantly rejected. The crowd would rather have any other prisoner than Jesus released. Even Barabbas, the notorious robber, was more acceptable than He. Being thwarted again, Pilate now decides to compromise with the crowd by having Jesus scourged. He will punish Him even though Jesus is guiltless, and after the scourging will set Him free. This scourging was a brutal form of punishment. The thongs were weighted with pieces of metal and of bone, and when the whip fell on the back the flesh was lacerated horribly. Sometimes the prisoner died before this awful ordeal was completed. Jesus did not die, and therefore the soldiers decided to have some fun with Him. They had heard Jesus claimed to be a King, and if He were indeed a King, why should He not look like one? They decided to dress Him like a King. One of the soldiers found an old military cloak in the barracks. It was worn and soiled, but it was good enough for a Jewish King, and this was put on Him. A King ought to have a scepter and so a reed was brought and put in Jesus' hand. It was a fragile scepter but good enough for a King of the Jews. A King ought to

have a crown, and a soldier hurried out and broke a few twigs from a prickly bush at the door, and weaving these twigs into a wreath he jammed the wreath down on Jesus' head. Being now properly dressed, the soldiers began to salute Him. "Hail King," they said, and as they spoke they kneeled and on rising completed the salute by slapping Jesus in the face. Some of the soldiers went so far as to spit upon Him. How long this tragedy went on we do not know. It soon ceased to be funny, and Jesus was led once more to Pilate. The Procurator can say only what he has said several times before—"I find no crime in Him." Gazing on Jesus for a moment, clad in the crown of thorns and the purple cloak, he exclaimed, "Behold, the Man!" In Latin the words were "*Ecce Homo.*" Translated into our English they mean, "Here's the Man!"

In what mood and with what accent did Pilate say, "*Ecce Homo*"? We do not know. It is said that the vibrations of the voice pass into the ether, and we know from experience that by the proper apparatus we can pick up these vibrations and transmit them to the brain. It may be that the vibrations of Pilate's voice are still in the ether, and that at some future time we may be able to pick up vibrations even two thousand years old. He is a bold man who dares assert that anything is impossible. Possibly Pilate spoke in disgust. He may have said, "Look at the revolting fellow! Set your eyes on the bloody creature! Gaze on the harmless lunatic! Why do you want to waste

any more time on Him?" Or he may have spoken in pity. He may have said, "Look at the poor devil, don't you pity Him? See the blood on His face and on His back. Don't you think He has suffered enough? Surely you do not want to kill Him now?" Or he may have spoken in a voice which expressed admiration. "Look at His composure! Look at His patience! Look at His poise! Whoever He may be He has the bearing of a king. Look at the kindly look in His eyes!"

Or he may have spoken in tones solemnized by awe. We know that Pilate was afraid of Jesus. Jesus frightened him by His silence. Jesus had a fashion of falling silent when other men were in the habit of speaking. And moreover Jesus had a mysterious way of talking. He said things which went out one could not tell how far, and used words which left the heart wondering. Moreover Pilate had received a message early in the day from his wife saying, "Have nothing to do with that righteous man. I had a dream about Him and I am very unhappy because of that dream." It may be that Pilate spoke in mingled pity and awe.

We know the effect on the crowd. Pilate's words did not soften the hearts of the chief priests and their officers but hardened them. They did not quiet Jesus' accusers but infuriated them. With one voice they "cried out." Our English word is too weak to express the full content of the Greek word. They shouted out, they yelled, they roared, "Crucify Him! Crucify

Him!" "*Ecce homo*," said Pilate. "Crucify Him!" thundered the crowd.

What strange things happen in this world of ours. Only a few hundred men looked on Jesus when Pilate spoke his two Latin words, but at the end of the century tens of thousands of men were gazing on the prisoner wearing the crown of thorns. At the end of the second century hundreds of thousands of men and women were looking at Him. At the end of three hundred years five million human beings were looking at Him. At the end of five hundred years the number had increased to fifteen millions. At the end of a thousand years the crowd had swollen to fifty millions and at the end of fifteen hundred years it had reached one hundred millions. Through the last four hundred years the number has been rapidly increasing, first one hundred and twenty-five millions, then one hundred and fifty millions, then two hundred millions, then three hundred millions, then four hundred millions, and now today there are over five hundred millions gazing on this King with the crown of thorns and the scarlet cloak. These five hundred millions gaze on Him in reverence and adoration, confessing themselves to be His disciples, and behind and around these five hundred million disciples there are another five hundred millions who look on as spectators dumbfounded and wondering. So far as we can now see the time is coming when all the seventeen hundred million human beings on our planet will have their eyes fixed on Jesus. It is more obviously certain today

than it has been at any time since Paul wrote his immortal words, that every knee will some day bow to Him, and every tongue will confess that He is indeed the master of the world.

*Ecce Homo!* This is what the church keeps saying all the way around the world. This is the message of all preachers. They are ministers of Christ. They are witnesses for Christ. Their business is to point men to Christ. This is the work also of Bible teachers. The goal of all Bible study is Christ. We search the Scriptures in order to increase our knowledge of Christ. Alas for the preacher or the Bible teacher who allows his eyes to wander away from Christ. We do not say, "Behold Christendom!" Christendom is shabby and we cannot inspire the world by extolling it. We do not say "Behold the church!" The church has many shining traits, and we who love her do well to ponder often her grace and her power, but it is not the church which we hold aloft for the world's contemplation. It is not an institution but a man upon whom we desire to fix the attention of mankind. We do not hold up Bible heroes as examples, for all of them sinned and fell short of the glory of God. There is only one man whom we urge men to follow—the man who was crucified between robbers. We do not say, "Look at us! Admire us! Imitate us!" We turn away from ourselves. Of our virtues and graces we have nothing to say. Our one exhortation is, "Behold, the Man!" It is only by fixing the eyes and

the heart upon this man that the human race can get on.

Through nineteen hundred years the church has been saying, "Behold the Man!" and the world has given heed to the invitation. The world has seen the man, and because it has seen Him, it is not slow to pass censure on His professed followers. One is puzzled sometimes to account for the merciless castigation of Christians at the hands of non-Christians, but this castigation is severe because the world insists on judging Christians by the standards of Christ. Men have heard His words and caught sight of His ideals, and it is because professing Christians fall so far short of these ideals that the vials of condemnation are poured out upon them. The church is constantly cudgeled by a great company of outsiders who persist in judging the church by the standards of Christ. Christians when compared with non-Christians make on the whole a highly favorable showing, but when Christians are compared with Christ the contrast is so glaring that those who sit in the seat of the scornful cannot remain silent. The church says, "Behold, the Man!" The world looks at Him, and then, gazing on the Christian, says to him, "You are not that kind of man!" From this judgment there is no escape. Paul long ago declared in the city of Athens that humanity had entered upon a new era in which God was going to judge the world by the man who He had ordained, the man who had been crucified and who had risen from the dead. That is what God is doing. He is judging

the world by Jesus Christ. We all without exception stand before the judgment seat of Christ to give account for the things we say and do. The Orient is not yet Christian, but the Orient judges the West by the standards of the man who was crucified.

It is an interesting fact that the trend of the world's thought through the last hundred years has swept human minds into a more serious contemplation of Jesus of Nazareth.

This has been the result of movements both inside the church and outside of it. Within the church we have had for a full century the scientific study of the Scriptures. The work of historical scholarship has been prodigious. No other book known to man has ever received such piercing and discriminating study as has been bestowed upon the Bible during the last two generations. This study has given us a changed conception of the Holy Scriptures. We now see as we did not see before that the Bible is the record of the evolving religious sense of man. The Old Testament does not stand on a level with the New. The Old Testament is preparatory. It is a preliminary stage in the religious development of the race. The Bible of the Christian Church is the New Testament, and the New Testament is a small collection of writings, the purpose of each one being to place before the heart the image of Jesus of Nazareth. That is what the New Testament says, "Behold, the Man!" Matthew says it, so does Mark, so does Luke, so does John. Through all of them one catches a divine voice saying,

"This is my beloved Son, hear ye Him." When we turn to the Epistles they speak the same message. Paul in all his letters knows nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. What is true of Paul is true of all the others. After one has read the New Testament from beginning to end, he sees, on lifting up his eyes, no man but Jesus only.

We are reading the Bible in a new way. We read it through Jesus. Every part of it now stands before His judgment seat. We are under no obligations to apologize for anything written in the Old Testament or to defend any of the Old Testament heroes. We are not embarrassed by crude ethics or by conceptions of God which the world has outgrown. We drop out the Mosaic sacrificial system and the Mosaic cosmogony and the Imprecatory Psalms, and everything else which we do not need. We have learned that only one thing is essential and that is an understanding of the Man of Galilee and devotion to the principles He taught and lived. When we become weary over the doings of Hebrew kings, and confused over the words of Hebrew prophets, we hear a voice saying, "Behold the Man," and looking at Him we become strong and glad again.

Certainly the spirit of the Christian Church has changed amazingly within the last fifty years. There was a time when Christians in large numbers were wildly enthusiastic over questions of church polity. The number of such Christians is small today. A generation or two ago multitudes of church members

placed the supreme emphasis on dogma. Doctrinal discussions and heresy trials and theological controversies troubled and embittered wide circles. Only a diminishing group any longer takes delight in such enterprises. The interest of men lies elsewhere. How can we account for this? What has wrought the change? The Christian world has been revolutionized in its attitude and temper by having its eyes fixed on Jesus. "Behold, the Man!" We behold Him, and our life is transformed by the renewing of our mind through a fresh vision of His glory.

The scientific movement is the mightiest movement of our time. It sweeps like a resistless tide through all the thinking of the world. Its slogan is "Behold! Look! Observe! Keep your eyes on phenomena!" Phenomena are the things which appear. They are the facts and events which report themselves to the eyes. Science counts all phenomena sacred. It is by the study of phenomena that we come to know what the universe is. By the long continued study of phenomena science has become convinced that the universe is one, that it is governed by law, that it is a growing universe, and that there is an indwelling spirit. Life climbs, unfolds, evolves. Each stage is higher than the one which precedes it. From the protoplasm onward the way is upward. The animal is above the vegetable, and the human is above the animal. Life reaches its climax in human personality. Personality is the highest form of life known. Upon personality we must therefore fix our eyes. It is the

phenomenon which has most to tell us. By the study of personality we can hope for light on the meaning of the gigantic process of which human personality is the goal. It is a mistake to suppose that Science has degraded man. It has exalted him. It has given him a dignity he never had before. It has opened a vista of uncounted ages through which all the forces of nature are seen at work to produce this masterpiece known as man. Man is henceforth to be the supreme object of scientific study. Scientists will forever specialize and various groups will devote their attention to lower forms of life, but it is incredible that any man after the scientific spirit has done in him its perfect work, will be content to confine himself to beetles and bugs, insects and snakes, and pass by as insignificant the greatest of all phenomena—the personality of man. Science is leading us to ascribe a heightened value to human beings.

When once in the realm of personality we are compelled to compare persons. One person differs from another person in glory. The whole human world lies before us as that world has developed through thousands of years, and in the vast multitude of persons which pass before the mind, there is one of exceptional magnitude and richness, so many-sided and so beautiful that He becomes unique. He is the fairest of ten thousand and the one altogether lovely. He is the holiest of the mighty and the mightiest of the holy. Nature holds Him up to us saying, "Behold, the Man! Here is the man I have been aiming at. This

is the man whom I have had in mind from the beginning. Observe His reasonableness, His sympathy, His love. Look at Him!"

And as we look, we can hear someone saying, "This is the kind of man you ought to be. This is the type of man you are intended to become." We can all hear that voice. When we stand before Jesus of Nazareth we know at once that He is the ideal. He is the kind of man we should like to be but which alas we are not. He is the man who haunts us in our dreams, and who goes on in front of us, saying, "Follow me!"

We look at Him and He becomes to us more and more the revelation of the Power which lies behind the universe, the incarnation of the Eternal Spirit which animates and controls the worlds. Here at last we get authentic information in regard to the character and purpose of God. No lower revelation is satisfying to us. God flashes through the inorganic world. "The heavens declare the glory of God," as a poet long ago declared. Through the thousand beauties of land and sea and sky, we get intimations of the nature of the Almighty, but after listening to all that the physical universe has to say, the heart is hungry still. We want to know more than seas and stars can tell us, more than the animal world is able to disclose. We want to know God's character, and that can be known only through a person. It is through human personality at its highest that the only satisfactory revelation of the heart of God can come. God is not like gold or silver or marble. He is unlike birds and fishes

and creeping things. Only a person can express Him in His innermost essence and disposition. Nature puts her hand on our shoulders and pointing to Jesus, she says, "Behold, the Man!" And when we fix our eyes on Him we hear Him saying, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." We cannot better express who and what He is than by the words coined by a keen-eyed observer long ago, "He is the image of the invisible God." Out of the cosmic forces this man has emerged. He is here. His attitude is friendly. He has a loving heart. He expresses the innermost essence of the universe. When we touch Him we come in contact with reality. To all who hunger after God and who long to find the way which leads to Him, the church strengthened by the latest discoveries of Science, says, "Behold, the Man! He is the way, the truth and the life."

"Behold the Man!" The Man, not the King, or the General, or the Statesman, or the Scholar, or the Poet, or the Philosopher, or the Artist, or the Architect, or the Orator, or the Composer! Look at the Man! We need all these others, but more than any one of them, and more than all of them together, we need the man. It is the full-statured man and not the clever specialist who will get us out of our tribulations and bring us to God.

"Behold the Man!" His name is written above every name. Go to England and ask for the name of the world's greatest man. England has produced a host of illustrious men. The shining names are

innumerable. But strange to say, when a Briton is asked to name the world's greatest man, he does not give you the name of a Briton, he names Jesus of Nazareth. Charles Lamb expressed the feeling of all Britons when he said, "If Shakespeare should come into this room we should all rise to greet him, but if that Man should enter we should all kneel."

Go to Europe and ask those who know Europe best, to name the world's greatest man. You will not get the name of a European, but the name of an Asiatic. Europe is covered with monuments erected in honor of a man born in Palestine. His name is above the name of every man ever born in Europe.

Come to America and ask who is the greatest of all the men America has known, and you will not be given the name of Washington or Lincoln, of Webster or Calhoun, of Lowell or Longfellow, of any captain of industry or of any merchant prince. There is only one answer and that is Jesus of Nazareth. The greatest man in England is not an Englishman, the greatest man in Europe is not a European, the greatest man in America is not an American. The greatest man in every land is the man who was crucified by Pilate. In the twentieth century the nations of the West come forward pointing not to an Occidental but to an Oriental, and exclaiming "Behold, the Man!"

"Behold, the Man!" is the cry of the heart which has found in Jesus the way to life. He gives peace and power and joy to all who trust in Him. "To as many as receive Him to them He gives power to be-

come the sons of God." He alone has the words of eternal life. In our social perplexities and political distresses, there is no one else to whom we can go. There is no solution for our industrial problems except in Him. It is this type of man who alone can bring capital and labor together. It is this man alone who can settle our racial problems. If we ask who shall put an end to international strife and bring in a thousand years of peace, the answer is, "Here's the Man!" One who travels round the world, carefully observing the currents of life in many lands, comes home with the deepened conviction that without Christ there is no hope for the world. No other religion has any personality to present comparable with the person of Jesus Christ. No other faith has a leader to offer to men who has the faintest chance of winning and holding the heart of the world. It is Christ or nobody. Without Christ we are lost. To any one who is familiar with the present world situation, the words of Peter come with thrilling and overwhelming force, "There is no other name under heaven, given among men, wherein we must be saved." The experience of nineteen hundred years has made clear to an increasing multitude that "God is in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself." No church can hope to endure except the church which exalts the Man of Galilee. No preacher preaches through the years with conquering power except the man who in all his preaching knows nothing but Jesus Christ the Man who was crucified and whom God raised from the dead. When death

lifts the curtain between this world and the other, we shall behold this man in His glory. "Now are we children of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that if He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him even as He is."

## "The Gods Ye Have Chosen"

*By* Robert Freeman, D.D., pasadena presbyterian church, pasadena

*"Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation."*

—JUDGES X – 14

"BUT One Sermon to Preach" may mean but one opportunity to preach a sermon; or it may mean but one message in one's mind to deliver an indefinite number of times, as in the case of that famous Japanese evangelist who has given the same discourse before thousands of congregations, and, naturally, now takes several hours in the delivery. If we mean but one opportunity to deliver a sermon, then the character of its content will be determined by the occasion, the audience, and the environment. One would have to know whether the congregation filled a Salvation Army Hall or University Chapel, whether it was made up of old Saints, of fighting Marines, or of Girl Reserves. However, if I may presume that I am to preach my one sermon only once; if I may also presume upon the sample cross section of humanity that we find in the average American Sunday morning congregation as my audience, assembling as it does all sorts and conditions of folk, running the gamut of age, health, social position, fortune, experience, and state of mind;

and if I may further presume that my one sermon to be preached by me to that group is to be delivered *today*, (for, as the years have so changed my emphasis that some themes which once were all-absorbing have completely lost their interest, it is to be allowed that growth will in the future, too, mean outgrowth and change, and my one sermon at a later time would probably be a different one); then I should read for my Scripture lesson the story of the wise and foolish virgins, and should take as my text Judges 10:14: "Go and cry unto the Gods which ye have chosen, let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation."

These words of the Lord to vagrom, vacillating, chameleonic Israel are sure and inescapable. Time will bring them to every mortal soul: "Go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen." With the gods of your choice ye shall have to do. Therefore, give thought to the picking of them.

Character is not created in the crisis—it is only exhibited. "He was makin' himsel' a' the time"; we read in Lockhart's *Sir Walter*, "but he didna ken maybe what he was aboot till years had past." Moses was not made in the Exodus, but in the backside of the desert. The years of strain in the White House did not produce Lincoln—they only discovered him. No man is a fool at fifty, or a sage, who has not been getting ready to make such revelation of himself. It is a big thing we ask of youth that it so acts and so chooses at fifteen and twenty as to leave itself with-

out deep regrets at forty and sixty; but that is the demand.

"Here's tae ye, ma lad, as forrit ye stert
Wi' a licht i' yer e'e, an' a sang i' yer hert,
Wi' yer plans an yer po'ers! But tak it frae me:
Be guid tae the auld man ye're gaein' tae be!

"Ye're makin' the hoose whar the auld man'll bide;
Ye're hingin' him picters that time winna hide;
Ye're chisellin' the wa's o' his lang memory:
Be kind tae the auld man ye're gaein' tae be!

"The airts that ye tak are no for yersel',
Ye are willin', nae doot, tae mak bed in hell—
That's a' very weel, if a gowk canna see
The richts o' the auld man he's gaein' tae be.

"There ay will be short-sichted bodies, ye ken,
What live for the day, an' ca' themsel's men;
But they're cowardly callants wha ne'er stop a wee
Tae think o' the auld man they're gaein' tae be.

"Sae, here's tae ye, lad, God make ye sic chiel
As can send the hale low-ordered pack to the de'il,
An' answer them a' wi' fire i' yer e'e,
'Ma fecht's for the peace o' an auld man tae be!'"

You can't get ready after you are hit. The virgins could not buy oil at midnight—they could only burn it.

What is preaching for? It is to prepare us for emergencies. It is a laying by for a rainy day. It is an accumulating of honey against the winter. It is the stowing on board such anchors as we may cast out

of the stern when we are driven before the Euroclydon and while we are wishing for the day. Preaching ought to supply me with four things as I need them: zest, zeal, courage, and peace. Preaching ought to make me catch my breath; ought to set me up; ought to make me take a new hold on life, find a new love of it, a new joy in it; ought to stir in me a new passion of desire as I behold the portraits of the good and the great, a new confidence making me exclaim as each appears, "That, that, by the grace of God, may be I." It ought to make life worth living, whatever the individual assignment. That is zest.

Preaching ought also to awaken in me zeal, fervor, make me believe in my own influence and, further, make me eager to exert it. Some of us know a little of the Argentine ant and of the difficulty of controlling it. A colony will grow at the rate of three hundred thousand a month. The only way effectually to get rid of the pest is to put enticing food slightly poisoned on the beaten path of the workers. These gorge themselves and hurry off to the colony where, under the direction of nurses, they regurgitate and thus supply food for the babes and the queens. The babes die at once, the others gradually. We are all in the business of carrying food for the next generation, be it pure or poisoned; and the aim of preaching is to inspire us to be purveyors of that which is good. There came to the First Division of the Army in 1917 a big Y. M. C. A. secretary named Ira D. Shaw, too big in fact, to be fitted with any stock army uniform. At the mo-

ment, the best field of service seemed to be with the battalion then under Major Theodore Roosevelt at Marson; so I introduced the two on the main street of the little French town. The major in his jerky, nervous way made quick appraisal of Shaw, springily rising on his tip-toes as he spoke.

"You look as if you must have played football somewhere."

Shaw phlegmatically conceded that he had played a bit on the gridiron in his day.

"Where did you play football?"

"At Columbia University."

"You are not *that* Shaw! Why man, I remember how Harold Wiecks used to make his gains over your back."

"Yes, my back's all scarred up with Harold Wiecks' cleats."

All of us who for the moment are in the line, are there to bend our backs and take our scars that the backfield may come through and carry the ball a little nearer to the goal.

Third, preaching is to inspire to courage, to enable us, if not to enjoy unpleasant places, at least to carry through them without shame to ourselves or increasing misery to others. R. L. S. who, in a letter to Dr. Alexander Whyte, confesses to being partly the obliged admirer of the Shorter Catechism and partly its conscientious enemy, in the same breath acknowledges to the little book much of philosophy and more of style. Something of the religious training typified by that

Presbyterian handbook of Calvinistic faith entered into his fiber and enabled him with courage and honor to bear his burden. "For fourteen years I have not had a day's real health; I have wakened sick and gone to bed weary; and I have done my work unflinchingly. I have written in bed, and written out of it, written in hemorrhages, written in sickness, written torn by coughing, written when my head swam for weakness; and for so long, it seems to me I have won my wager and recovered my glove. I am better now, have been, rightly speaking, since first I came to the Pacific; and still, few are the days when I am not in some physical distress. And still the battle goes on—ill or well, is a trifle; so as it goes. I was made for a contest, and the Powers have so willed that my battle-field should be this dingy, inglorious one of the bed and the physic bottle." Preaching ought to do that for us, ought to make us game to endure without whining, give us courage to stand unwhimpering when our share befalls of the ills of men. "We are in a desperate state," wrote Captain Scott to Sir James M. Barrie just before his end in the Antarctic field of ice, "feet frozen, no fuel, and a long way from food; but it would do your heart good to be in our tent to hear our songs and our cheery conversation." If preaching has any value it ought to provide us with the courage needed to endure and thus to strive.

Preaching ought to minister peace, peace in the face of great trials and irreparable losses, the art of throwing off care, of leaving the past in the lap of the

Eternal and of fearing no evil for the future. Have you thought of the sweet ministry of that one word "peace," with its long soft vowel and its lasting sibilant whispering down the corridors of the Soul, and making our worship to be divine service if only by its final benediction, "Peace I leave with thee, my peace give I unto thee"?

These things preaching ought continually to be bringing to us: zest and zeal and courage and peace. But these must be brought before we need them. "At such an hour as ye think not," the crisis comes. Youth cannot be sure it will not require its defences till age arrives. Bramwell Booth in his "Echoes and Memories" gives a stirring glimpse of his father the general at his mother's grave emulating Abraham who "stood up from before his dead and spake." What background such address reveals! "I have never turned from her these forty years for any journeyings on my mission of mercy, but I longed to get back, and have counted the weeks, days, and hours which should take me again to her side. When she has gone away from me it has been just the same. And now she has gone away for the last time. What then is there left for me to do? Not to count the weeks, the days, and the hours which shall bring me again into her sweet company, seeing that I know not what will be on the morrow, nor what an hour may bring forth. My work plainly is to fill up the weeks, the days, the hours, and cheer my poor heart as I go along with the thought that when I have served my Christ and my generation

according to the will of God, which I vow this afternoon I will to the last drop of my blood—then I trust that she will bid me welcome to the skies as He bade her." William Booth had fortified his soul against such an emergency, he had chosen his gods and he found them not to fail. But the catastrophe might have come when his children were but infants, when his great enterprise was still nebulous, when he himself was an outcast maligned and persecuted even by the Protestant Church upon which he had thought to count. Other men have lost their wives at the very dawn of marital felicity, other men have been smitten ere the cheers of college commencement have died down. There is no period over which we may with impunity neglect to prepare ourselves for life's searching tests.

How then shall we erect our fortifications? We shall need to have some sort of philosophy of life. "What is philosophizing?" asks Epictetus in one of his conversations. "Is it not a preparation against events which may happen?" It certainly is profitable to search out for ourselves the various theistic arguments and Christian apologetics that we may always have a reason for the faith that is in us, that we may love the Lord with all our *mind* as well as with all our soul. Hagel declares that the nation that has a false idea of God has bad laws, bad institutions, bad government. That truth begins with the individual. But our conception of God must be determined when our souls are at ease. That semi-rebuke of the dying

highlander in the fields of Flanders was warranted when the padre lifted his head and said "Times like these make us think seriously." "Ay," murmured the Kiltie, "but I hae done ma thinkin' lang syne." You can't get ready after you are hit. You can cry in the times of your tribulation only to the gods whom you have chosen in the days of your peace. However, relatively few of us are really philosophical, few have the theological bent; and even those who have the philosophic mind are not consistently ruled by it, indeed are often found going wholly counter to it. Habits rule in a wider empire than thoughts. Professor James insisted that, with the exception of only one-thousandth part of our activity, all we did was automatic and habitual; and therefore urged that we make our nervous system our ally instead of our enemy. Habit is repetition become involuntary, to the point where attention and fatigue are at the minimum, as in riding a bicycle or playing the piano. That is the hope of religion in the life of the individual. I find myself puzzling to discover certain fixed phrases to use in family prayers which phrases may very well stick in the minds of my children forever with happy and devout connotation, indeed be the word of God to them in some day of trial. That was the effect of the daily prayer of Ian Maclaren's old schoolmaster "Bull-dog" in the Muirtown Academy. His lads went to the ends of the earth, but wherever two or three met up with each other, in the wheat farms of the north-west, on the sheep ranges of Australia, in the diamond fields

of South Africa, or in the service in Egypt or in India, they would soon be recalling Bulldog, recounting with pride their thrashings at his hand, and then end by piecing together the old prayer: "Lord deliver the laddies before thee from lying, from cheating, from cowardice which are as the devil. Put Thy fear in their hearts, and common sense in their heads, and help them be honest men all the days of their lives!" That prayer had been chiselled into their memories by constant repetition, and perhaps had a greater religious value for them than anything else.

That is the value of the simple exercises of religion, prayer, Bible reading, church attendance, the communion; not that they work any magic, save only that same magic by which evil communications corrupt good manners, the same magic counted upon when we plan that our children shall hear good music, see good pictures, listen to choice language, the magic consequent upon exposure. By what right shall I omit those simple exercises from my family life when I know it will probably mean the cheating of my children of those sources of help they may need any time and are sure to need some time? However their ideas of the Lord Jesus may change in changing environment, I have no fear for them if they have been steadily exposed to His face and character and work and will through the days when the sun was bright. There's a story of Ty Cobb that illustrates what I mean. The Tigers were playing in New York and were so far ahead that the game had become uninteresting to the

observers. Near the end of the last inning Bill Donovan, coaching on first, said to Cobb, "Step off the sack, and let them tag you out, Ty." Cobb seemed to fall in with the idea; and of course like a flash, the ball was shot from the alert pitcher to first base. Right then the fans saw a piece of the prettiest baseball they had ever witnessed. Cobb hesitated perhaps a fraction of a second, and then was off. The enemy closed in about him, the short-stop and the out-field reducing his chances of escape, while he zig-zagged and feinted. Then some one threw a little wild. Cobb dived, and in a cloud of dust slid for the base; and, when the ball arrived at second, the hero of Detroit was dusting himself off. After the game Donovan enquired: "Why didn't you let them tag you? You said you were going to." "Well I really meant to," answered Ty, "but when I saw that ball coming over, I just couldn't stand still. Something rose up inside of me that said if those fellows got me they would sure have to fight for me." I know what happened, don't you? All Cobb's past experience at stealing bases, at outwitting the enemy, all his habit of winning refused to be downed by the whim of a moment. He had cut his baseball grooves, and a casual desire was not enough to get him out. The habit of the years determined his conduct in the crisis. That's what religious habits will do, determine a mode of thinking and acting in normal situations which will be our involuntary mode in abnormal situations. Or let me illustrate it another way. One evening a few months ago, the Los Angeles Philhar-

monic Orchestra played without a leader. On the empty conductor's stand lay an open score and a slim baton. The musicians played with rare skill and feeling Beethoven's Seventh Symphony and the Andante Cantabile from Tschaikowsky. The body of their leader, Walter Henry Rothwell, lay below, his casket banked with flowers. He had trained them through the years and now that he was gone, they could not fail.

You cannot borrow much in the crisis. Character can't be shared. Faith can't be shared. Since, therefore, some day faith will be indispensable, seek it now. Since some day you shall have to cry on the gods of your choice, seek now One who will not fail, acquaint now thyself with Him and be at peace.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which taken at the flood leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat,
And we must take the current when it serves
Or lose our ventures."

## Aware of the Eternal

*By* William L. Stidger, D.D., Linwood Boulevard Methodist Episcopal Church, Kansas City

*"Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you."*
—Acts xvii – 23

PAUL was aware of the immortals, and he knew that the Athenians were.

It is good for human beings to have a seismographic awareness of God.

Paul knew that the men of Athens lived always as in sight of the immortal gods.

If I had but one sermon to preach, it would be to trumpet the great tidings into the hearts of humanity that we are living, whether we know it or not, every year, every day, every minute,—within sight of the Immortals. That thought, once reigning in the mind and heart of humanity, would remake the world in all of its human relationships.

Two of Edwin Markham's poems will give us a running start into this thought. These two poems will give us a setting, a background, a theme through which we may talk and think about the business of acting, living, breathing, dreaming, and achieving, as if we were constantly and everlastingly looked down upon by the Immortals.

When a man once gets this idea into his soul, he can no longer do any petty thing, and mean or dishonorable thing; he can never again indulge in petty talking or thinking or living, personally or socially.

No human can sin, nor wrong another; no human can do an ignoble thing if he honestly believes that he is living in sight of the Immortals.

The first Edwin Markham poem which I want to use as a setting for this thought is called "A Workman to the Gods," and it reads as follows:

"Once Phidias stood, with hammer in his hand,
Carving Athene from the breathing stone,
Tracing with love the winding of a hair,
A single hair upon her head, whereon
A youth of Athens cried, 'O Phidias,
Why do you dally on a hidden hair?
When she is lifted to the lofty front
Of the Parthenon, no human eye will see."
And Phidias thundered on him: 'Silence, slave,
Men may not see, but the Immortals will!' "

Let me add to this poetic setting several lines from another Markham poem. I do this in order to link two extremes of life, a sculptor and a cobbler. I want to link Heaven and earth; star-dust and dandelions, in this setting. I hence turn to Markham's poem, "How the Great Guest Came." It is the story of Conrad the Cobbler of Ingleburg.

He had his dream that Christ was coming "his guest to be." In this sermon I am not interested in the main theme of this second poem, but in the few lines that describe the kind of a cobbler Conrad was. He too,

like the great Phidias, worked as in sight of the Immortals all the while:

"Doubled all day on his busy bench,
Hard at his cobbling for master and hench,
He pounded away at a brisk tat-tat,
Shearing and shaping with pull and pat,
Hide well hammered and pegs sent home,
Till the shoe was fit for the Prince of Rome.
And he sang as the threads went to and fro:
'Whether 'tis hidden or whether it show,
Let the work be sound, for the Lord will know!'"

Let us link these last two lines of the cobbler up with the last two of the great Greek sculptor Phidias:

"Silence, slave;
Men may not see, but the Immortals will!"

Here you have the thought of my sermon in poetry.

The Greeks lived always, as in sight of the Immortals. No wonder they produced a group of philosophers, a group of sculptors, a group of poets and dramatists which gave this period in human history the title of "The Golden Age." Nor has any period in human history produced such culture, such intellectual integrity, such masterpieces of beauty and wonder, as this age.

Any race of people which works as in the sight of the Immortals is bound to grow great in mind and heart. An age which worships the Almighty shall grow great, but an age which worships the Almighty Dollar shall grow small in its soul. That is the danger of this day. We are living too much in this age and

not enough in the ages. As Harold Begbie says: "It is an age of the degradation of love; an age which is talking nonsense on the edge of an abyss." And as Dr. Fitch says: "It is an age of frantic immediacy."

One would surely want to do his supreme best if he felt that the Immortals were looking down upon his workmanship, if he knew that the Eternal God was an eye-witness to his deeds. The Greeks felt that way. They lived as people who were conscious of the Eternal and of the Immortals.

Paul knew the Greeks. In his Mars Hill oration he appealed to their consciousness of the gods and of "the unknown God," a statue which he had seen on his way up from the city to Mars Hill. In fact, there were numerous statues to "The Unknown God" in Athens. A teacher in Athens told me that the reason why the Greeks erected these statues to "The Unknown God" was because they already had erected statues to all of the known gods, and to be sure that they had honored all of the gods, even the god whom they did not know, they were accustomed to carve memorials and statues of recognition to "The Unknown God."

This custom is a striking illustration of this theme, that the Greeks worked always, as within sight of the Immortals, whether they were known or unknown gods. And this consciousness strangely influenced their thought and work.

And since the Greek nation gave us during this period the Golden Age of sculpture and literature, art and statesmanship, we have a right to assume that the

gift of this genius was due to a consciousness of the fact that they were living and working for Eternity.

Paul was appealing to this consciousness which the Greeks had, when he made that famous Mars Hill address. It was a masterpiece, as much so as his immortal speech before King Agrippa. I like to read that story over and over.

The Greeks had in their sculpture what Mr. Lorado Taft says that American sculpture will have to find again in order to command the respect of its generation. Indeed, he says that the whole world of art will have to recover this in order to get back to its old place of prestige, power, prophecy and poetry. "It will have to get the hint of Eternity back into its work."

An Athenian story tells me that when Phidias, the greatest sculptor who ever lived, was in Athens doing his work on the Parthenon, that the Athenians were slow in giving their money to complete the work of the master. They were in those days like they are now, slow to give, and plenteous in criticism.

Phidias became impatient with them, and once said to an Athenian millionaire who felt that the whole matter was of little moment: "These temples will stand long after we have been forgotten."

The great sculptor was a little more polite with the Athenian millionaire, but his words carried the same condemnation which he thundered at the Athenian fop who chided him about his care in carving the hidden hair of Athene:

"And Phidias thundered on him: 'Silence, slave,
Men may not see, but the Immortals will!'"

I

*Great Sculptors and Painters Have Worked as in Sight of the Immortals.*

Michael Angelo's "David" in Florence, Italy, lifts one out of time and makes one feel eternal. One cannot stand before this masterpiece, this colossal dream, vibrating with living reality even though carved out of white marble; standing as it does straight as a tree, clean and spiritual, that one does not feel a sense of Immortality.

Nor can one stand in St. Peter's looking upon Angelo's "Moses" with its great beard and brows, its piercing eyes; those eyes though carved out of marble, shooting Jovian thunderbolts; with the tablets of stone on his knees as if recording the Ten Commandments, without feeling an awareness of everlasting things and thoughts.

Nor can a man step into the Louvre in Paris and look down that long aisle where stands the Venus de Milo, that exquisite piece of living, vibrant womanhood, pulsing and ready to leap with life and laughter and love, that he does not feel a sense of immortal beauty and maternity.

The Victory of Samothrace does the same thing to one's soul. It seems to leap with life even though carved from cold and breathless marble in the long, long ago.

The Mona Lisa gives one the same feeling, a Corot's "Angelus," a sweeping, singing story of Creation such as Angelo has achieved on the walls of the Sistine Chapel, a Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper,"—these all lift one out of time into the Eternal.

"The Hint of Eternity" is in these great masterpieces. One feels it there. And one does not feel thus before a great work of art if the artist himself did not feel thus in creating that work. If the artist felt that he was working in sight of the Immortals, the one who looks upon that work of art will feel it, though centuries have intervened. It is the atmosphere of Eternal things which hovers about such a masterpiece of labor and love.

> "Silence, slave!
> Men may not see, but the Immortals will!"

II

*Great Writers have had this Consciousness of the Eternal Presence as They Wrote Immortal Lines.*

One test of a great poem is this, that it must take a man out of Time and make him feel that there is an Eternal. If a poem does that for me I am sure it is a great poem.

When I first read Edwin Markham's poem about Edgar Allen Poe, called "Israfel," some of its lines seemed to lift me up until I felt the pulse-beat of the Eternal:

"He lookt on cities in their crumbling hours,
Where Death obscurely mumbles out his rune,
Hoary, remote, alone, where time-torn towers
Hang spectral in the moon.

"He walked our streets as on a lonely strand;
His country was not here—it was afar,
Not here his home, not here his motherland,
But in some statelier star.

"Life was his exile, Earth his alien shore,
And these were foreign faces that he passed;
For he had other language, other lore,
And he must home at last."

The day that Mr. Markham sent me a copy of this immortal poem I was lifted out of Time and made to feel Eternal. That poem met my test of a great poem. When I was through its reading, I knew that there was an Eternal and I felt the Cosmic Consciousness. I felt my At-one-ness; His At-one-ment. It was an experience like a conversion.

Why was this? It was because the poet who wrote it was working as in sight of the Immortals.

Thomas Carlyle called the writers of the French Revolution "wistful listeners to the Eternal Voices of Prophecy."

Dante is said with his Divine Comedy, to have "broken the silence of ten centuries."

Lincoln, I can prove, was aware of the Immortals, when he was delivering his famous Gettysburg address. Here is the proof.

Dr. Barton, in his two volumes on the life of Lin-

coln, has investigated with painstaking care the whole background of the writing and the delivery of this famous address. He has documents on every copy of that address. He has compared every one of the extant copies, word for word, sentence for sentence. He shows us that in all of the drafts of this address written before the actual day of its delivery, the phrase "Under God" was not yet born.

But, under the stress of that great occasion, as Lincoln stood on his feet in that battlefield, this great man suddenly felt the presence of the Eternal, the consciousness of his Oneness with God, and he extemporized that phrase which is now an immortal part of his address: "That this nation, *under God*, shall have a new birth of freedom."

None of the advance copies of this speech had the phrase "Under God" in them, but all of the reporters' copies which were taken down in shorthand had the phrase "under God" in the address. Dr. Barton says:

"Not many of the changes in revision were important, but one calls for comment. It is the insertion of the words "Under God." This change occurred, I am confident, on the platform. My judgment is, that under the solemn spell of the occasion, he determined to use these words, for they are in the Hale report, and the Associated Press report, and Lincoln himself included these words in the revision of the address subsequent to its delivery."

This is a thought to stir the fountains of the soul; that Abraham Lincoln, our great Immortal, on that

platform, on that tremendous occasion suddenly became conscious that he too was speaking in sight of the Immortal because of a sensitive seismographic awareness of the Eternal, and he inserted that great phrase: "Under God."

The great writers have known the everlasting truth that Phidias himself thundered:

> "Silence, slave,
> Men may not see, but the Immortals will!"

III

*The Old Prophets Lived as Within Sight of the Immortals Always.*

Isaiah lived and talked, conscious that God was looking on. No honest man can read the Book of Isaiah and not feel the consciousness of the Eternal lingering in every line of it.

One cannot read the Bible thoughtfully and sincerely, in holy quiet, in a place of meditation, that he does not feel the Eternal. This is the greatest proof of its Divine Origin and inspiration. Its every book brings God to man.

Its single lines innumerable make one feel the presence of the Eternal. Read that great old prophecy of the coming of the Messiah, and catch its hint of the Eternal. Let this gigantic book lift you out of Life and make you feel Eternal.

Elijah knew that God was there all the time. He was taking no chances in his battles with the followers

of Baal. He had an awareness of his God which is better than proof. He had a confidence in his God which was baffling and bewildering to his enemies because he was living in the presence of that God all his days.

A man becomes all-powerful when he lives every day as in God's presence. His work becomes great work.

John the Baptist knew that Christ was looking on and he knew that Christ was the Son of God; that He was Immortal; that Christ was a man the latchet of whose shoes, he, John, was not worthy to unloose. He had seen the Dove descending and resting over the head of Jesus when he baptized Jesus in the beautiful Jordan. He had heard that voice. He KNEW. He knew that he was preaching and prophesying as in the very sight of the Eternal God which gave him prophetic fire and power.

One of the great spiritual treats of life is to read after these men of the prophetic days with the idea of this sermon in heart; reading as in the presence of men who in turn were aware that they lived and moved and had their being in the presence of the Eternal God. We absorb some of that consciousness of God by reading after them. They take us out of Time and make us feel Eternal!

Jesus! You knew that you worked and taught and lived in the sight of God. That truth throbs in your every living line and pulsing precept! That consciousness beats its way out of every deed and every

prayer and every lovely living word you spoke to lonely people. You knew! You knew! You knew that God was there all the time!

That was the reason why you were so confident that you could cure blind eyes, deaf ears, leprous bodies. That was the reason why you faced loneliness and homelessness, the Garden of Gethsemane, and Calvary, with so much confidence. It was because you knew that your Father was there all the time.

That was why you looked up, on the cruel cross of Calvary, and cried out: "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do!" You knew all the time that God was there! You were living and dying as in the sight of that Father all the time.

I challenge any child or man or woman to read the New Testament through and not feel that he is living in God's presence. No wonder General Lew Wallace, in accepting Ingersoll's challenge, became converted to the Divinity of Christ before he was through writing that great novel about Christ which we call "Ben Hur." Lew Wallace soon realized that he was in the presence of one of the Immortals before he was through that story. No man can honestly and sincerely study Christ's life that he does not soon know that he is in the presence of the Eternal.

From Moses to Jesus these men, too, thundered into human souls the truth that Phidias knew:

> "Silence slave!
> Men may not see, but the Immortals will!"

## IV

### *It Does Something to the Soul to Live as Within Sight of the Immortals.*

Spiritualism ought to make men holy. Whether it does or not, I do not know. I doubt it. They all seem to be more concerned with protoplasm, protoplasmic plates and photographs; knocking on tables, and harsh guttural voices, than any spiritual matter.

"By their fruits ye shall know them," ought to be the test put to Spiritualism, and if that test is put, I fear that Spiritualism would fail today.

Any child works better if it works under the consciousness of the presence and sympathy of a parent. To me, one of the most exhilarating experiences that a public speaker has, is the High School Commencement address which he makes. I like them better than College Commencements, Chautauqua, Lyceum, or Noonday Lunch Club speeches, because there is a beautiful consciousness in the hearts of the graduates of the presence of father and mother on that night. Awkward boys dressed in black, sweet girls dressed in white, awkward addresses, tremblings, flowers in one's hands, shortness of breath; thrilled, frightened, but loved and loving. Parents in front with misty eyes, beating hearts, and lumps in their throats,—all beautiful with the presence of loved ones; all done as in the presence of those who care greatly.

What boy has not had the experience of playing ball or football, and being whispered to, as he bends

over to receive his signals: "Your Dad's here watching you!" Lord God Almighty! Would a stone wall stop your lithe young body when you know that your Dad is there looking on? It would not, much less a few human boys and bodies. I know. I have been told that magic news: "Your Father's watching the game!"

It is so with school work, oratorical contests, debates, and human life. When a child knows that father and mother are looking on with love and confidence and sympathy, there is no greater incentive to heroic work on earth or the stars than that. That is the incentive supreme!

We are a superstitious set of human beings. About two thirds of the peoples of the earth are conscious all the time of the eyes of the dead. Ibanez has written a book called "The Dead Command." It is intended to prove that the dead influence our lives more than the living. It is an ingenious book.

One day in Paris as we started for Versailles in a great bus, we were halted. A funeral was passing by. All traffic stopped. I shall never forget the picture of a Paris *gendarme* standing at salute while that funeral procession passed by.

I stood one day in front of the Cenotaph in London, that stark, naked statue in honor of the Unknown Dead. I watched a hundred busses pass by, and ninety-nine out of every hundred people aboard those busses lifted their hats as they passed that Cenotaph. I never look upon it that the tears do not fill my eyes.

I too have lifted my hat and dropped my tears to "The Unknown Dead." The British have carved on this Cenotaph: "IN MEMORY OF OUR GLORIOUS DEAD." I have read a hundred cards, tied to bouquets of flowers, on that Cenotaph: "To Daddy," "To My Darling Boy," "To Brother Bill," "To our Son,"—cards and faded flowers, flowers from the homes of the rich, fresh every morning; bouquets of wild flowers put there by children's hands,—God, who could keep back the tears! I always weep when I stand on that spot. I am aware that I am in the symbolic presence of the Immortals!

Our great ship, the Sphinx, was passing through the Straits of Messina. I wanted to look upon those glorious heights of Gallipoli which the British and Australians stormed and consecrated forever with their blood. I wondered just where we were, when suddenly the ship stopped. The French officers on that ship stood rigidly at attention, with the kind of a salute that only French officers can give. They gave it in honor of the dead British soldiers. It was a magnificent gesture which shall live forever in my memory. The memory of that night's blood-red sunset which glorified the battlefield of Gallipoli shall not live any longer than the memory of that silent ship and the salute of those French officers one July evening as we passed through the Straits of Messina.

No man can sin if he knows that he sins in the presence of the Immortals, those we have loved and lost

awhile, those who are crowned of God in God's eternal days and God's eternal ways.

No man can do a little deed when he might be doing a big thing if he gets this truth into his soul, that the deed he does this day is done in sight of the Immortals. No man can be stingy in his living and in his giving if he understands the truth of this sermon that he is living and that he is giving in sight of the Immortals. No man can be petty in his social and economic relationships with his own, with his fellowmen or with his God, if he realizes that he is living in the presence of the Immortals. No man can do a sneaking thing in business, if he knows that all of his personal life, his business life, is lived in the sight of the Immortals!

To me it is a tremendous thing to think that God looked on at the birth hour of Jesus; that He sent His angelic hosts to be there. But it is even a more thrilling thing that God looked on at my re-birth in Him; that God is there in that holy hour when I am re-born and when you are re-born in Him. He is there! He was there! He will be there! That is glorious! That is truth!

To me it is glorious that God was present at the baptism of Jesus and at the consecration of the Christ to His holy task of living and loving and lifting: "And I if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

But it is even a more glorious thing to know that God is present whenever we too consecrate our lives, our talents, our powers, and our money, to Him.

To me it is a glorious thing that God as well as Satan was present at the Hill of Temptation, that when Jesus was tempted of Satan to accept the powers of materialism, an Earthly Kingdom, a selfish Kingship, God was there also, and Jesus triumphed.

But it is even a more beautiful thing for me to know that God is present when I too, am tempted. He is present as well as the Powers of Evil, to make me know that the angels are on my side if I call them.

To me it is a thrilling thing that God was present at Calvary when Jesus died; that God looked on; and that Jesus was aware of His being there; and that God gave Him strength and poise; and that dying was easy when God the Father was present.

But it is even more comforting to me to know that God will be present at my Calvary; at my dying; at my suffering; in my loneliness, if I wish Him there.

To me it is a thrilling thought that God was present and looking on at the Resurrection Dawning; and that Jesus knew He was there; and that Jesus felt His power pulling and tugging at him to waken, to arise, and in the words of William Allen White, "take up the journey to the stars;" and that Jesus heard His voice and answered.

But it is even a more awakening thought to me that God will be present at my resurrection, at my awakening, if I am living in the consciousness of the Eternal always and all days.

So shall we mere human beings know to say, when some lesser soul bids us stoop to smaller things than

our dearest dreams would challenge us to; so shall we know to say, when our bodies pull and tug at our souls to stoop to mud and scum; so shall we know to say, when temptation hours come; so shall we know to thunder like Phidias, when lesser men laugh at our dreams, at our intellectual integrity, at our search for truth:

> "Silence, slave,
> Men may not see, but the Immortals will!"

And in our relationships with spiritual things, so shall we learn to sing in our everlasting souls the song of Conrad the Cobbler:

> "Whether 'tis hidden or whether it show,
> Let the work be sound, for the Lord will know!"

Let us live as in the presence, not only of the Immortals, but of the Immortal God. Let us live as Paul knew the Athenians lived, when he cried out to them on Mars Hill:

"He whom ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you!"

It was a crude thing that the first Leland Stanford Chapel had in the center of its great dome was that material representation of the eye of God. But it was there, in the old chapel which was destroyed by the earthquake. This eye was never replaced in the new chapel, and we are glad that it was not, for it was an architectural monstrosity.

But as a symbol, it is an everlasting truth which bids us mere human beings to rise and take up our

journey to the stars; that God does look down upon us; that God does live among us and with us; that God does walk by our sides just as He walked by the disciples on the Emmaeus Road; that we do feel strange stirrings within our hearts and strange burnings; for are we not conscious that we live and move and have our very being, we Greeks of God, within sight of the Immortals and the Immortal?

> "Silence, slave,
> Men may not see, but the Immortals will!"

"The Fool in Christ"—Immanuel Quint, of Hauptmann's great book, lived so constantly and so consciously in the "Presence" that he finally came to think that he was Christ. It is a strange tale, but the very thought that Christ was looking on, made him so aware of Christ that he wanted to live every minute as in Christ's Path of Bleeding Feet.

It is a modern Imitation of Christ which it thrills the devout soul to read. Immanuel Quint so loved Christ and so lived in His presence, that the author says: "He fell asleep, when he slept, over the footsteps of Jesus." The presence of Christ so completely absorbed him that "a love for humanity gnawed at him;" the presence of Christ so permeated his very being that he himself had followers in every walk of life,—scholars, students, youth, children, sinners,—because, as the author says:

"Skepticism cannot hold out permanently, even in

persons of culture and education, against absolute conviction."

The presence of Christ was so real to Immanuel Quint that "when he thought of Christ his heart ached." The presence of Christ was so much with him that when they spat upon this poor "Fool in Christ," stoned him, and finally arrested him and were taking him to jail, he laughed to himself, like a mother with her babe at her breast, and said: "Are these guards not the fools, even though they think I am the fool? Do they not know, can they not see, that Christ is here walking by my side? Can they not see that Christ is manacled to my wrists?"

And the guards wondered why a man should laugh on the way to prison. The presence of Christ was so real to the "Fool in Christ" that when he once decided that he would answer hate with hate, cruelty with cruelty, anger with anger, spite with spite, war with war, bitterness with bitterness, force with force, the author says: "Even the poor fool knew that he must renounce Christ."

The presence of Christ was so real to him that when they put him in jail he knew that Christ was there with him. He heard Christ say: "Immanuel Quint, lovest thou me?" And he answered: "Yea, Lord, more than life!"

Then he heard Christ say again: "Immanuel Quint, lovest thou me?" And he answered again: "Yea, Lord, more than life!"

A third time he heard that tender voice speak to

him: "Immanuel Quint, lovest thou me?" And he answered a third time: "Yea, Lord, more than life itself!"

Came the voice of Christ again to him: "Then Immanuel Quint, I shall come and abide with thee forever!"

The "Fool in Christ" lived as in the presence of Christ, as in the sight of the Immortals, and Christ came and did abide with him forever, even unto death.

He was just a "Fool in Christ" and he could not have explained why he was so sure of Christ; why he was so certain that Christ was there with him "even unto the end of the world." But he was certain with a great confidence. He was like the character in Hay's "Pyke County Ballads:"

> "I don't pan out on the prophets,
> Free will and that sort of thing,
> But I've believed in God and the angels
> Ever since one night last spring!"

He could not explain, he could not prove, he could not blue-print, he could not diagram, but he knew that he was living in the presence of "God and the angels," like "The Fool in Christ," and that knowledge colored his entire life; his personal acts, his social relationships, his thoughts, his deeds, his dreams, his visions, his very stride down the street, his commercial dealings, his blood stream, his God-dream.

This awareness of God is something which we cannot prove, but it is just as real as the thought of Row-

land Sill's poem, "The Venus of Milo," wherein he contrasts the idealism of pure womanhood with sensual womanhood, and closes his convincing and poetic picture with the living lines:

"But as heaven deepens, and the Cross and Lyre
Lift up their stars beneath the Northern Crown,
Unto the yearning of the world's desire
I shall be 'ware of answer coming down;
And something, when my heart the darkness stills,
Shall tell me, without sound or any sight,
That other footsteps are upon the hills;
Till the dim earth is luminous with the light
Of the white dawn, from some far-hidden shore,
That shines upon my forehead evermore."

Praise God, we mystics know that "Other footsteps are upon the hills."

Thank God that we can sing to the dawn:

"I am aware of a glory that runs
From the heart of myself to the heart of the suns!"

Praise Him from whom all blessings flow that we know the truth of these two lines:

"Then something sacred whispers from the skies;
Then something deathless looks from dying eyes!"

If I had but one sermon to preach, but one truth to proclaim to humanity in a life-time, it would contain the core of this thought,—that we human beings are living while we live; and that we shall die when we do die; in the presence of the Immortals; from Moses to Jesus; from Isaiah to Paul, from birth to

death; from Genesis to Revelation; from germ to God. We are the Greeks of God.

Paul was using this psychology when he presented his text to the Athenians under the figure of "The Unknown God" in his Mars Hill address:

"Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you!"

And that thought is echoed in my Symphonic Theme:

"And Phidias thundered on him: 'Silence, slave,
Men may not see, but the Immortals will!' "

And in more humble walks of life, Conrad the Cobbler spake it for the common run of humanity:

"Whether 'tis hidden or whether it show,
Let the work be sound, for the Lord will know!"

# The Call to Unity

*Preached by* CHARLES H. BRENT, BISHOP OF WESTERN NEW YORK, *at the Cathedral, Lausanne, Switzerland*

August, 1927

*"Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one; that the world may believe that thou has sent me. And the glory, which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."*

—JOHN XVII — 20-23

WE ARE here at the urgent behest of Jesus Christ. We have come with willing feet. All the prayers and desires and labors of seventeen years meet in this hour.

The call to unity is primarily from God to man. It is for our good that the appeal is made. Through unity alone can the Kingdom of God be set among men. Through unity alone can the world believe and know that the Father has sent Jesus Christ to reveal Him to the whole human race. It stands as the unal-

Note—Bishop Brent presided at the World Conference on Faith and Order held in Lausanne during August, 1927. On the first Sunday of the Conference he preached this sermon in the Cathedral at Lausanne. In forwarding his manuscript to the publishers, Bishop Brent wrote: "For the times, I feel that the sermon which I am sending you is of more vital importance than any other one thing."

terable condition on which He can fulfil His mission to mankind. This no one doubts who accepts Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

Like all God's calls it is an invitation to coöperate with Him. His will is part of His nature and is set once for all time. He lays no compulsion on us. He awaits our coöperative response which will lay hold of His will and make it our own. If unity has slipped away from our grasp it is the common fault of the Christian world. If it is to be regained it must be by the concerted action of all Christians. Every section has shared in shattering unity. Every section must share in the effort to restore it.

The call to unity is like the flow of a river. It never ceases. It has been sounding with varying accent through the successive generations since the beginning. To us it has of late come with new force through the voice of God's Spirit speaking to the many divided communions of our day, as the call of a shepherd to his scattered flock. We have responded to His call. We are gathered here at His bidding. He presides over us. In proportion to our obedience to His guidance we shall be able to promote His will and embrace it as our own. He appeals to us to hush our prejudices, to sit lightly to our opinions, to look on the things of others as though they were our very own—all this without slighting the convictions of our hearts or our loyalty to God. It can be done. It must be done.

It is for conference, not controversy, that we are

called. As God appeals to us sinners to reason together with Him, so we Christians mutually appeal to one another for a like fellowship. Conference is a measure of peace; controversy, a weapon of war. Conference is self-abasing; controversy exalts self. Conference in all lowliness strives to understand the viewpoint of others; controversy, to impose its views on all comers. Conference looks for unities; controversy exaggerates differences. Conference is a coöperative method for conflict; controversy, a divisive method. I do not say there may not be occasions where controversy may be necessary. This is not one of them. This is a Conference on Faith and Order. We are pledged to it by our presence. Let us play true to our tryst.

It is the call of Christ which arrests us. What He said then with human voice He repeats now through His indwelling Spirit. The general need of unity is set down by Him in a proverbial saying—"Every Kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; every city or house divided against itself shall not stand." This is as true today as when it was first uttered. It has been accepted by the world of men as applying to every department of life in its separate groupings, political, intellectual, scientific, social. In increasingly wide circles men are striving for unity. Lying at the centre of all and providing the only enduring cement is religious unity.

The Gospel provides for intimate relationship with Christ. Our Lord speaks as He thinks. He thinks in

terms of reality. All life is a symbol. He declares that of which it is symbolic. So He says not "I am like the vine, ye are like the branches" but "Abide in me and I in you . . . I *am* the vine, ye *are* the branches." Nature in its simplest manifestations preaches its eternal sermon, points to Him for whom it exists.

Again, have you not noted how to the very end of His ministry Jesus Christ presents Himself and those whom He commissions in pastoral terms? It is not "I am like the good shepherd." He is the reality of which the men who watched their flocks were the shadow. It is "I *am* the good shepherd." "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one flock, one shepherd." The Shepherd can fold His flock only if He lays down His life in bringing them together. "Therefore," He says, "doth the Father love me." He lays His life on His aim and is unafraid.

All this was counted as axiomatic even before the Gospels were written. St. Paul, writing when the Gospel was oral, strikes sectarianism of all ages between the eyes by calling divisions "carnal"—"for whereas there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are ye not carnal and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another I am of Appollos; are ye not carnal? . . . For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus

Christ." Division in the eyes of this intense man is fatal to the life of the Church.

What I am about to quote is as familiar to you as anything in Scripture, but I repeat it as signifying at the earliest beginning of Christianity the mind of Christ on the indispensability of unity as read by His great apostle. Now it is the human body that is the symbol of which Christ and His Church represent the reality. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are our body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member but many. . . . Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular." In relation to the Holy Communion "we, who are many, are one bread, one body." Again it is as of a household that the Church is spoken, "Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone," or as a temple, or as the holy city, the heavenly Jerusalem. In every instance the symbol has unity as essential to its existence as light and heat are to the sun. So inherent is unity that it can admit of no racial, sex or social distinctions but all are "one man in Christ Jesus."

But there are still greater heights toward which we must rise. Either in the words of our Lord Himself, or of the Spirit of Our Lord speaking through a disciple in the early second century—it is all one—the

kind of unity which the Church must exhibit is that which unites the Father to the Son. Earthly imagery is inadequate and heaven is called to bear its witness. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one; as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me." If our Lord counts unity a necessity, how absolute must that necessity be! Upon it depends our ability to know Jesus Christ in His full splendor, to do His works, to evangelize the nations. It is a tribute to the greatness of man that it needs the full weight of the whole Gospel for the miracle of a single conversion. The missionary quality of Christ's prayer is passionate—"that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. . . . that the world may know that thou hast sent me." What a challenge to Christendom to set its own house in order before it further infect the Eastern world with sectarianism that robs the Gospel of its corporate power and gives people a stone instead of bread! The hundred missionary societies in China today are as suicidal for Christianity as the civil divisions are to her national peace and prosperity. The Christian Orient today is in just revolt not against

Christianity but against divided Christianity, not against foreigners either in politics or religion, but against the domination of foreigners.

Jesus Christ revealed by His life on earth exactly what the unity was between Himself and His Father. It is not so mystical as to be unintelligible to the simple-hearted. We are not left as workmen without a pattern for their task. The kind of oneness exhibited by Christ with His Father on earth is clear beyond dispute—a paternal and filial relationship, and a liberty reached through absolute dependence consummated by supreme sacrifice. If individuals and groups were to practice these two principles, disunion would fade away like snow before a summer sun. When all Christians recognize God as Father and look on the things of others as of brothers in Christ, the family of God will be complete, a glorious Church without spot or wrinkle.

God calls man to unity—His ideal. Man calls to God for unity—his need. Unity is not only a thing of beauty but a matter of practical necessity. There are patches of unity already, it is true, in an underlying loyalty to Christ. But not enough to make Christianity effective as a peace maker, a liberator, a universal power, or to satisfy the mind of God.

Some countries have a minimum of division at home, especially where there is a state church. But purely national churches of whatever sort add to the rival denominations which split Christ in the mission field, and make Christianity contradict itself as a

world religion. In other countries, as in America, churches of every sort and every name obtain. The evil effect is most evident in rural districts where the churchgoing population is divided into impoverished rival groups without moral and spiritual potency. The Christian religion is often degraded into a weak philosophy, incompetent and futile. Some churches claim exclusive possession of the truth as found in Christ and damn those who find other interpretations of His life and teaching. The result is that not fifty percent of the population even profess to be followers of Jesus Christ, many of them because they are sadly perplexed and mystified by jangling claims and voices. Churches which have no real reason for holding apart still adhere to their shibboleths. Federative effort continues where organic unity is the only logical step. There is no one voice coming with force from every pulpit in every country, as there should be, on such great fundamental questions as peace and war, what constitutes Christian marriage, the social claims of Christ, the supra-national character of the Church. The Catholic mind is rare. In our hearts most of us are devotees of the cult of the incomplete—sectarianism. The Christ in one church often categorically denies the Christ in a neighboring church. It would be ludicrous were it not tragic. The situation is suicidal and we are here as a solemn protest against it. We try to get together in matters of practical import but as often as not we find ourselves thrown back on our conception of Christ, the nature of the Church, God's

mode of governing His Church, the substance of the Gospel message. Christology may not be slighted. The value of theology must be admitted. The history of Christianity must be studied, if we are to get anywhere.

Were there no call to man from God to unity, our need would none the less make its high protest to God in heaven for unity. But we would be hopeless and helpless in the organized confusion to which we are party. It is God who takes the lead. His will that they may all be one must eventually be man's will if to do God's will becomes the passion of the human heart. When Christians accept Christ as supreme, they cannot but walk as companions and friends. His life as portrayed in the Gospels is His reliable teaching. His words as interpreted by His life are final and our duty to obey becomes our privilege, our joy. It is to encourage such faith in God made manifest in the flesh that we are in conference. That is the meaning of faith rather than a form of sound words, however important they may be. To quote the words of Zinzendorf—"I have but one passion. It is He! even He!" Men like Sadhu Sundar Singh, Mahatma Gandhi, and Stanley Jones are helping us to realize this more and more. In proportion as we rally around the living Christ during these days shall we banish our prejudices, enlighten our understanding, and correct our mistakes.

Again as to the means of establishing intimate relationship with Jesus Christ, for that is our chief quest

and goal, is it not? We dare not be exclusive in sacramental, in mystical, or in intellectual modes of approach. Christ's agile feet journey to the human heart along many and diverse paths. That He comes by these and innumerable other routes who will deny?

After all it is not these central principles that should give us great difficulty. Rather is it that which lies at the circumference—the government of the Church, or order. Personally I should be well content were we to let this last vexed subject lie for the present rather than give it hasty consideration. We cannot pretend that it is unimportant. By means of it the Church is held together in the fullness of organic life, world-wide and all embracing. But we cannot in our brief conference cover the whole vast field. Moreover if that conciliar action did not break unity, conciliar action cannot mend it. May it not be that, all other things being settled, we will grow into it as did the early Church?

But I must close. We are living in a world that has lost its way. Religion as summed up in Jesus Christ and His Kingdom can alone hope to rescue it. It must be, as God's voice has warned us from the beginning, and our own experience has tragically confirmed, unified religion. God has used, beyond anything we had a right to expect, our divided Christendom. But now that we know the sin and disaster of sectarianism we cannot hope that He will use it much longer. Though all time lies before us, we may not rest on our oars. We must move without haste

and without rest. Let us keep the purpose of unity firm in our hearts and look on all Christians of whatever name, as brothers beloved. It is thus that, by practising unity, we shall gain unity.

God's Spirit is presiding over us to make us will and do His good pleasure. It is He that will change for us, in His own way and in His own time, the impossible into the possible, and bring about that consummation of Christian hope in a Church that will be one flock under one Shepherd. To that end I make my own the impassioned appeal of St. Paul which is as applicable to this gathering of men of many nations as to the Ephesians to whom it was originally addressed: "I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith you were called,"—note the moral qualities essential for unity—"with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one Faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all."

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